

NO. 31

DEC 10¢

# TOP-NOTCH Laugh

COMICS

AN  
MLJ  
PUBLICATION



MONTANA



# WEB COMIC UNIVERSE.COM

# CONTENTS PAGE



DECEMBER 1942 ★ NO. 31

POKEY OAKEY . . . Ever get into a fight with a fellow and have him sic his big brother on you? Well, with POKEY OAKEY it's just the opposite . . . he meets the big brother and then has to fight the little one. How little is the little brother? Well, pretty little—say about eight feet tall. . . . . **PAGE 3**

READER'S PAGE . . . Who wins the TOP-NOTCH LAUGH COMICS contest *this* month? Your answer is on. . . . . **PAGE 12**

BLACK HOOD . . . Alone, unarmed, and held captive by THE SKULL, THE DUDE, and THE BRUISER, three deadly killers, THE BLACK HOOD faces death and a grave beneath the murky waters. . . . . **PAGE 13**

POISON FOR THE PATRIOT . . . A Black Hood story. . . . . **PAGE 23**

SEÑOR SIESTA . . . No, that's not a bullet streaking past. That's SEÑOR SIESTA running like blazes, and with good reason, too. Pancho Grillo is after him. . . . **PAGE 24**

SNOOP McGOOK . . . We bring you once again SNOOP McGOOK. Oh, why lie about it? He's just a dope, but you've got to admit that he gets things done. **PAGE 29**

THE INTELLIGENT MORON . . . A Snoop McGook story. . . . . **PAGE 35**

GLOOMY GUS—THE HOMELESS GHOST . . . "No, no, a thousand times, no—I won't get into that body," says GUS. "I'd rather die than say, 'Yes.' " . . . . **PAGE 36**

SUZIE . . . Get out your autograph books! That slightly dazed young lady thumbing a ride on the road there is SUZIE, on her way to Hollywood to become a movie star. . . . . **PAGE 42**

MEET THE EDITOR . . . Here's your chance to meet Harry Shorten, the man behind TOP-NOTCH LAUGH COMICS, the man who sees that you get better and better features in your favorite magazine with each succeeding issue. . . . . **PAGE 48**

PERCY . . . "Percy's a sissy," says Butch. BAM!!!! "Percy's not a sissy," says Butch. . . . . **PAGE 49**

3 MONKEYTEERS . . . "Look," says Fagin, "what have I done to deserve this? First those \$\$\$!& monkeys ruin my business for me, and then when I try to get my revenge, that Mystery Man sticks his two cents in. This sure is a fine way to treat a perfectly respectable villain" . . . . . **PAGE 55**

TOP-NOTCH'S HALL OF FAME . . . TOP-NOTCH LAUGH COMICS brings you a story of modern Florence Nightingales, the courageous young nurses who worked 24 hours a day at Bataan to save the lives of hundreds of wounded American soldiers. . . . . **PAGE 61**

HARRY SHORTEN, Editor



# POKEY OAKEY

by Don Dean

WHEN WE LAST SAW POKEY OAKEY HE WAS PLODDING UP TO THE MOUNTAIN RETREAT OF THE RATFIELD FAMILY, SCOURGE OF THE OSARKS



EVEN TH' MORONS IN THESE HYAR PARTS SNUB TH' RATFIELDS BUT ET'S MAH DOOTY TO THANK 'EM FO' SHOOTIN' ME DOWN OUTA THET TREE AH WAS STRUNG UP TO! YESSUH!



LOOK, BROTHAH BEN, THET GANGLIN' GOOSE IS A-MAKIN' STRAIGHT FER US! WEARIN' A BADGE LIKE THEM REV-IN-NOORS, TOO!

THET'S YO' FAULT! YO' SHOULDN'T BE SO WASTIN' WIFF TH' SHOT! (SPAT)

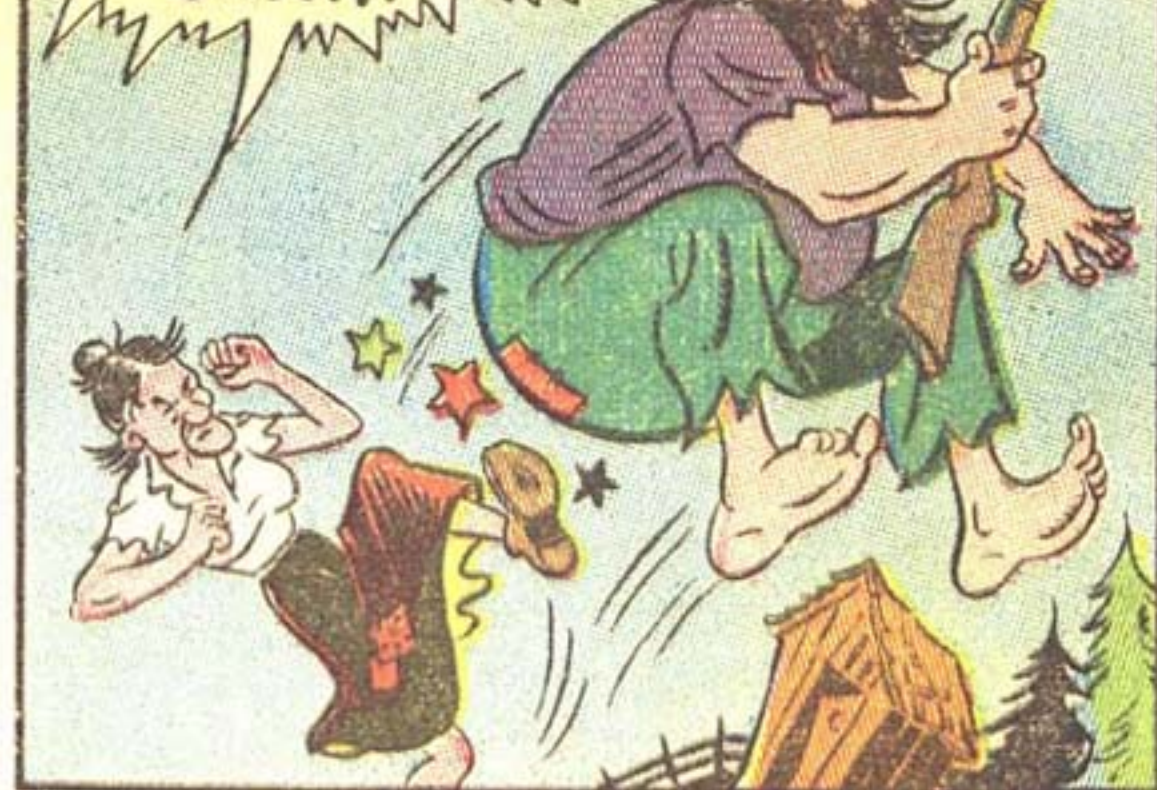
NOW WHUT KINDA  
DEVILTRY KIN MAH  
TWO BABIES BE UP  
TO NOW? C'MON  
'FESS UP TO YO' OL'  
MAMMY!

SHH! HUSH UP, MAAW!  
ITCHY IS FIXIN' TO  
**PLUG** THET YOUNG  
FELLAH A' COMIN'  
THIS WAY!

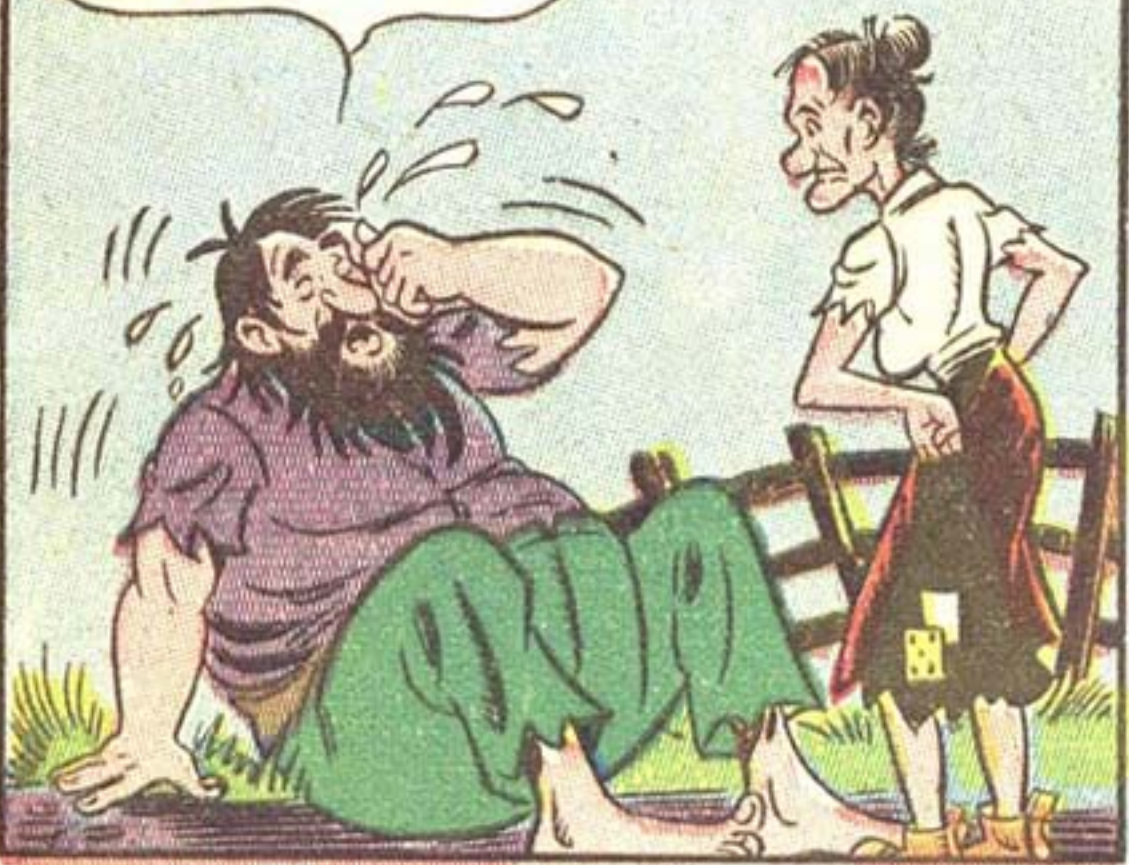


A YOUNG FELLAH?  
HEVVINS T' BETSY!  
**PUT UP THET**  
**SHOOTIN' IRON.**  
**SON!!!**

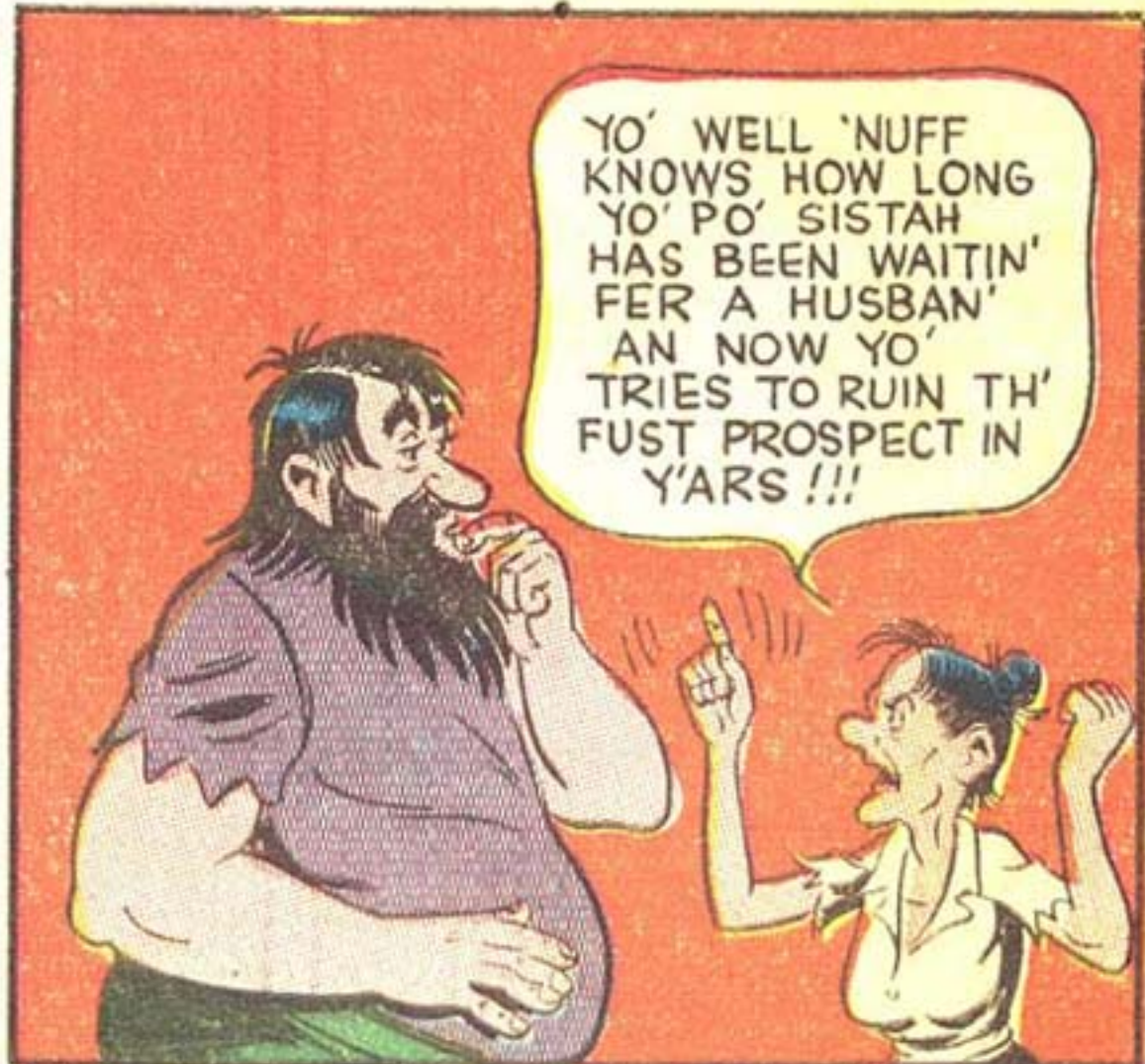
**BANG**



B-BAW! WUFFO'  
YO' DO THET, MAW?  
YO' DONE SPOILT  
MAH AIM--BAW-W!!



YO' WELL 'NUFF  
KNOWS HOW LONG  
YO' PO' SISTAH  
HAS BEEN WAITIN'  
FER A HUSBAN'  
AN NOW YO'  
TRIES TO RUIN TH'  
FUST PROSPECT IN  
Y'ARS !!!



YO' MEANS YO'  
GONNA AX THIS  
STRANGAH A' COMIN'  
TO **MARRY UP**  
WIFF SISTAH  
CLEMINTINE?

**EGGS-ZACKLY!**  
BESIDES HE HAIN'T  
A STRANGAH--  
THA'S **POKEY**  
**OKEY!**



HE'D STILL  
PREFER GETTIN'  
SHOT, AH'M  
THINKIN'!

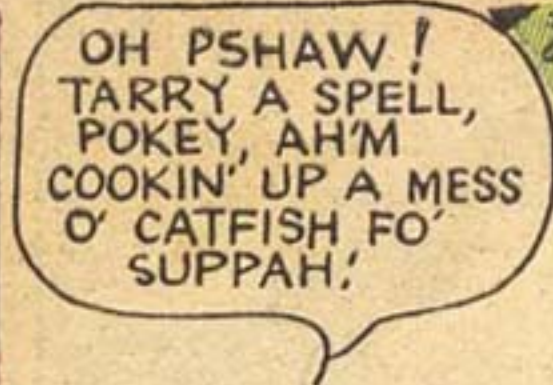
SHET YO'  
CLAP TRAP,  
SON!

♪ HOW DE DEW,  
POKEY! ♪





HOWDY, YO' ALL! AH MERELY WANTS TO THANK YEW FO' SHOOTIN' THET ROPE AH WAS HUNG UP WIFF!--G'BYE!



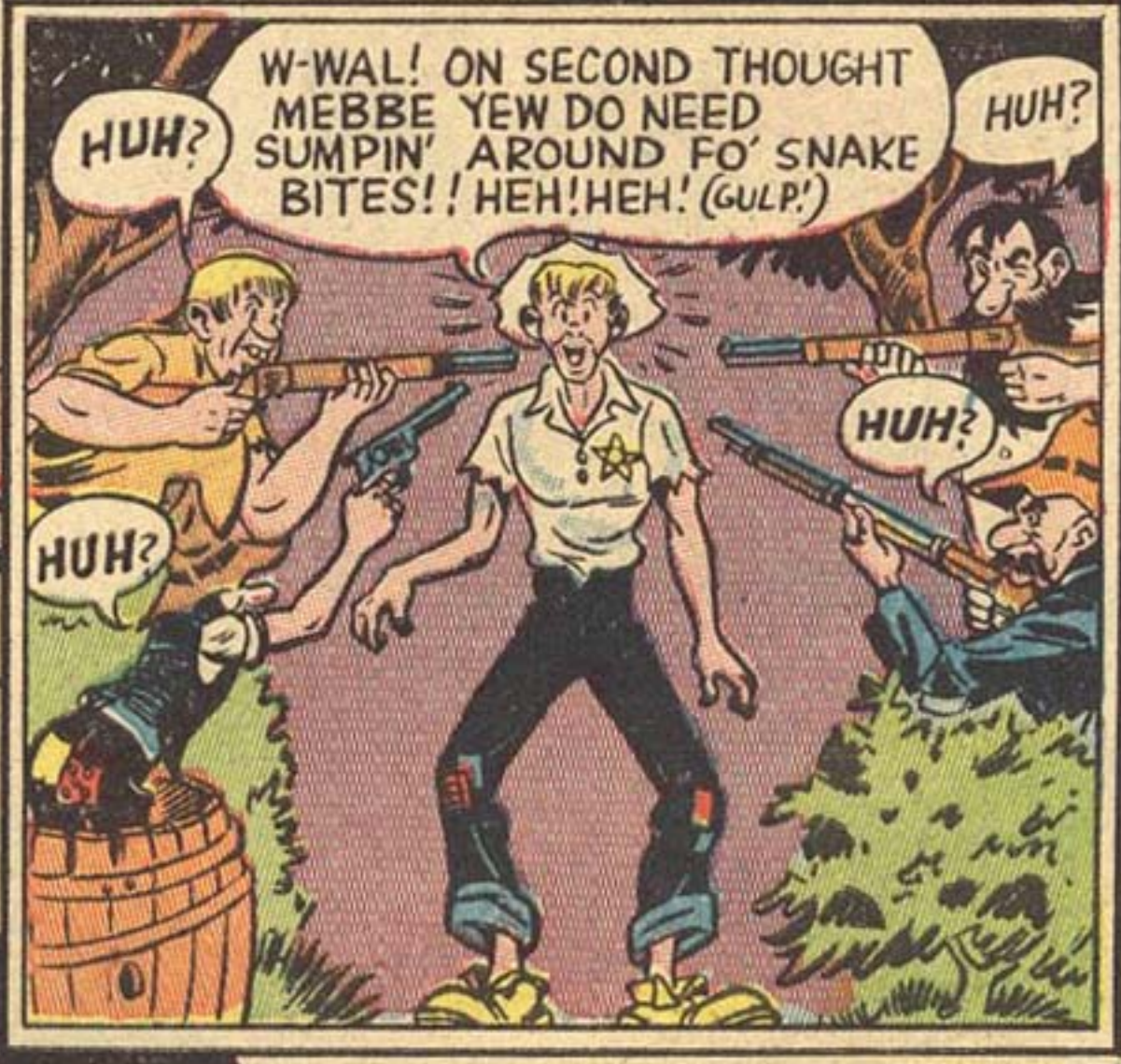
OH PSHAW! TARRY A SPELL, POKEY, AH'M COOKIN' UP A MESS O' CATFISH FO' SUPPAH!



THANK YEW, NO MAAM-- SAAAY WHUT'S **THIS** UNDAH HYAR??



AH MIGHTA KNOWED IT!! AH'M TURNIN' IN EVAH **LAS' ONE** O' YEW RATFIELDS FO' **MOONSHININ!** YESSUH!!



W-WAL! ON SECOND THOUGHT MEBBE YEW DO NEED SUMPIN' AROUND FO' SNAKE BITES!! HEH!HEH! (GULP!)

HUH?

HUH?

HUH?

HUH?

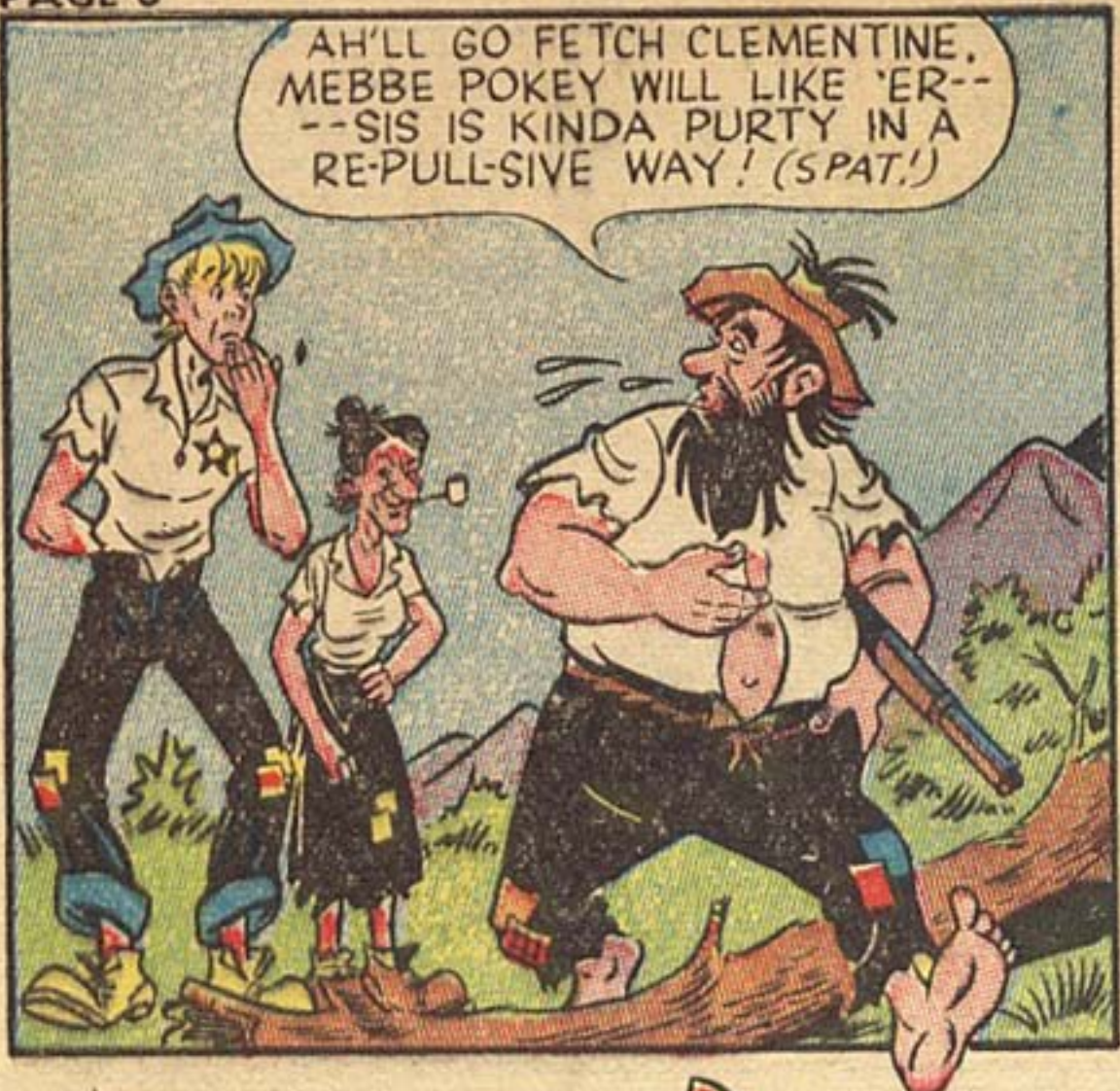


POKEY! YO' MIGHT AS WELL KNOW IT, EF YO' EVAH GETS OUTA HYAR IT'LL BE ONE O' TWO WAYS---AS A **MARRIED MAN** OR A **DAID DUCK!!**

HMMPH! THEY SOUNDS ALIKE TO ME!



YEAH! BUT WIFF TH' MARRIAGE YO' GETS TO **SMELL YO' FLOWERS!**

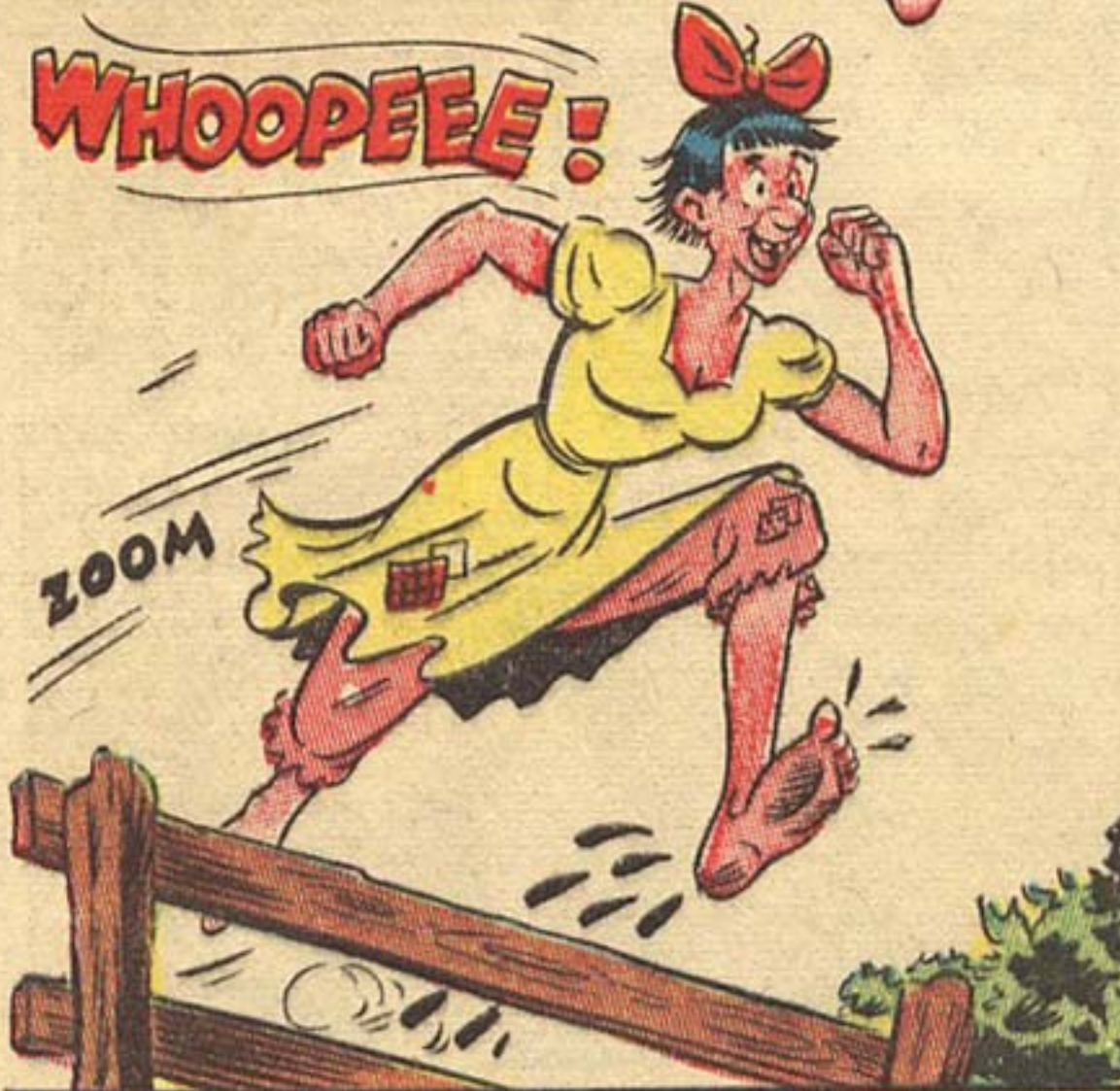


AH'LL GO FETCH CLEMENTINE. MEBBE POKEY WILL LIKE 'ER--SIS IS KINDA PURTY IN A RE-PULL-SIVE WAY! (SPAT!)



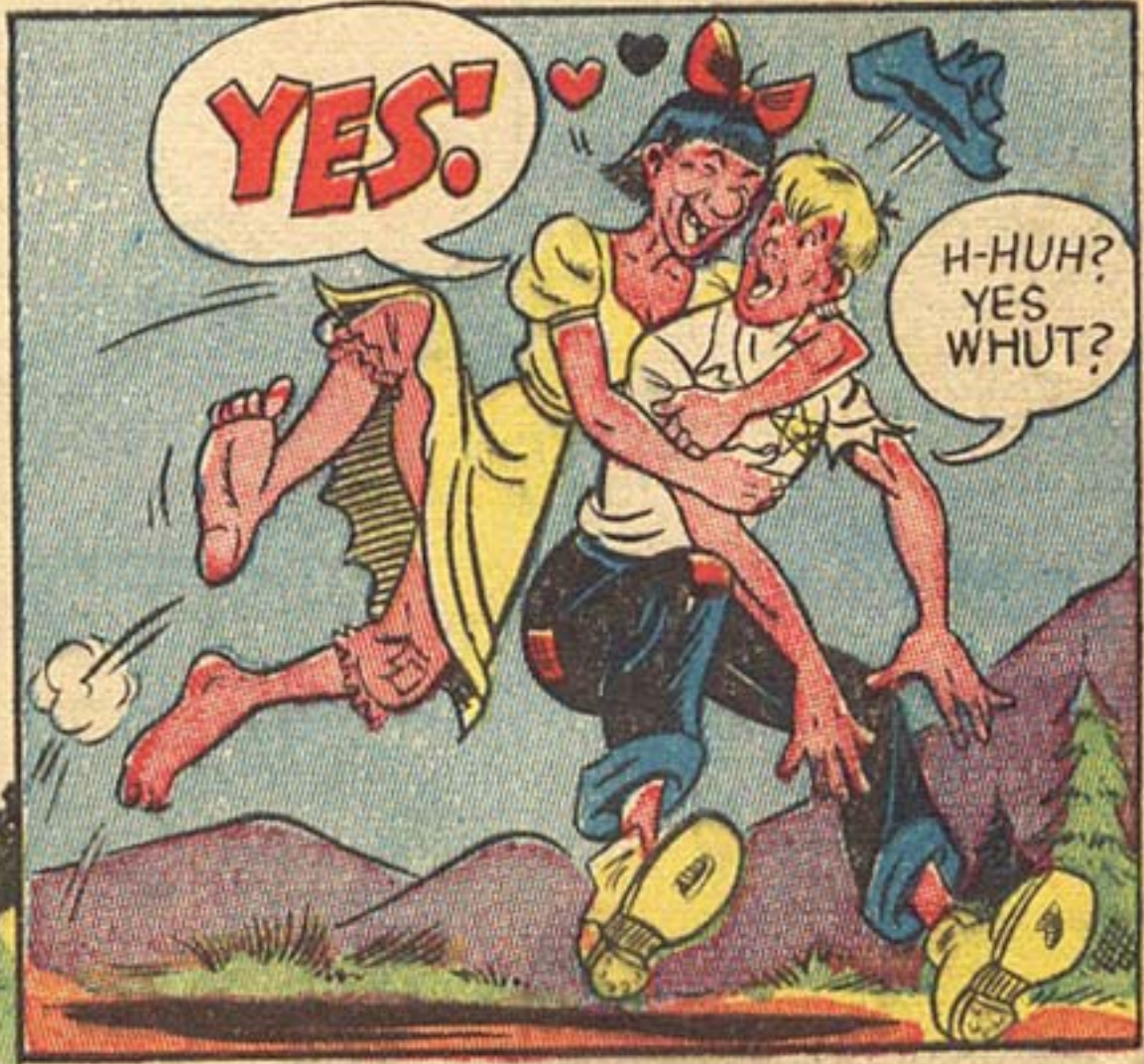
HEY THAR, SIS! STRAIGHTEN UP YO' HAIR BOW---A YOUNG FELLAH HAS COME TO COURT YA!!

GLORY BE!! NO FOOLIN', BEN?



WHOOPEEE!

ZOOM



YES!

H-HUH? YES WHUT?



HOORAY! CLEMENTINE HAS EXCEPTED POKEY!!!

POKEY DONE SWEEP HER OFF HER FEET--WHUT TECK-NEEK! YIPPEE!!

WIFF SIS MARRIED AN' GONE THAR'LL ONLY BE EIGHT O' US IN TH' SAME BED!! OH PEACEFUL NIGHT!!!



N-NOW JES' HOLD YO' HOSSES, FOLKS--AH DIDN'T PROPOSE TO YO' SISTER AN' AH HAIN'T AIMIN' TO MARRY UP WIFF HER NOHOW!

WAA!  
AH'M JILTED!

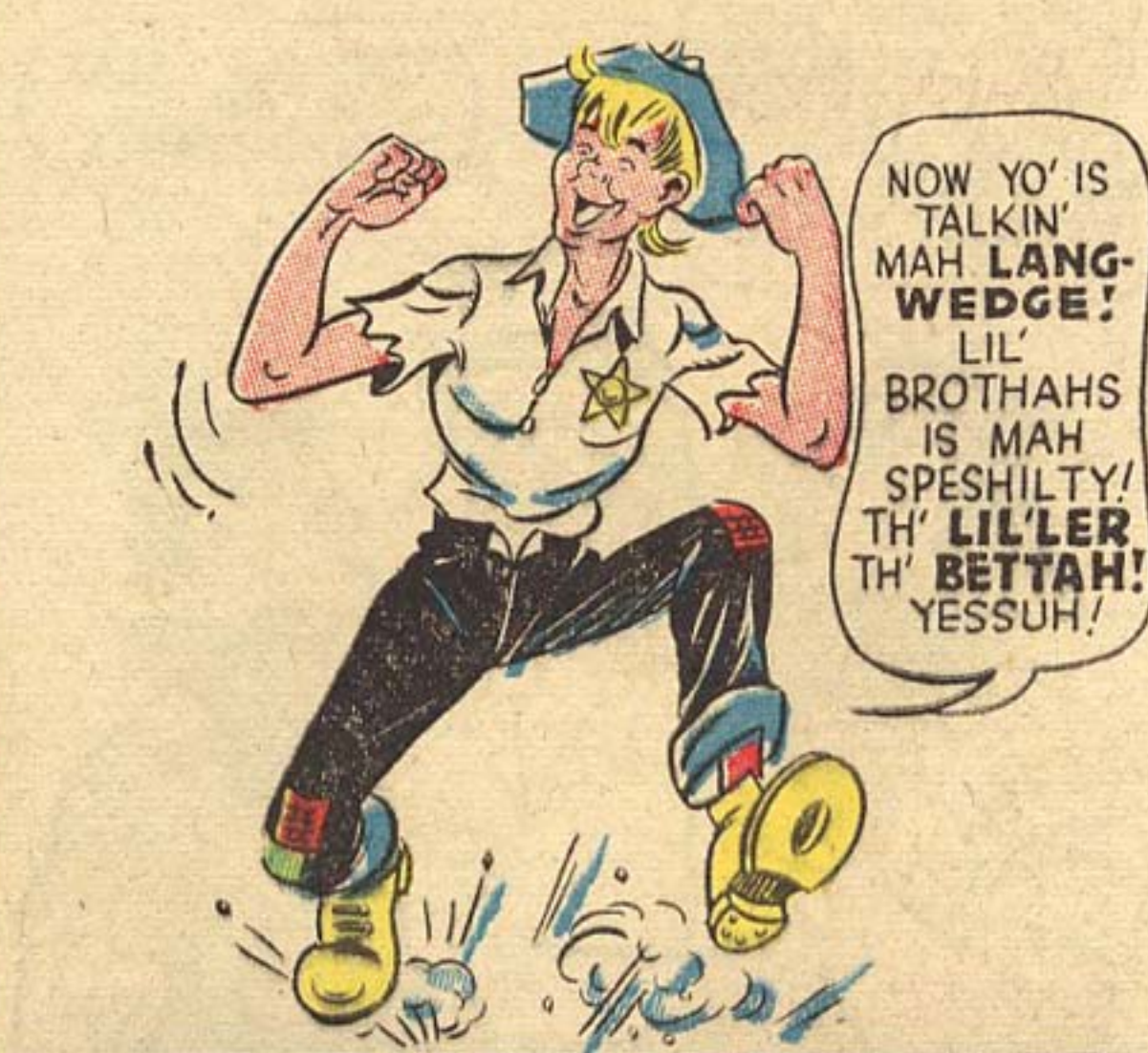


POKEY OAKY ETHAH YO' **MARRIES** MAH SWEET, INTELLY-JUNT SISTAH OR **ELSE** --

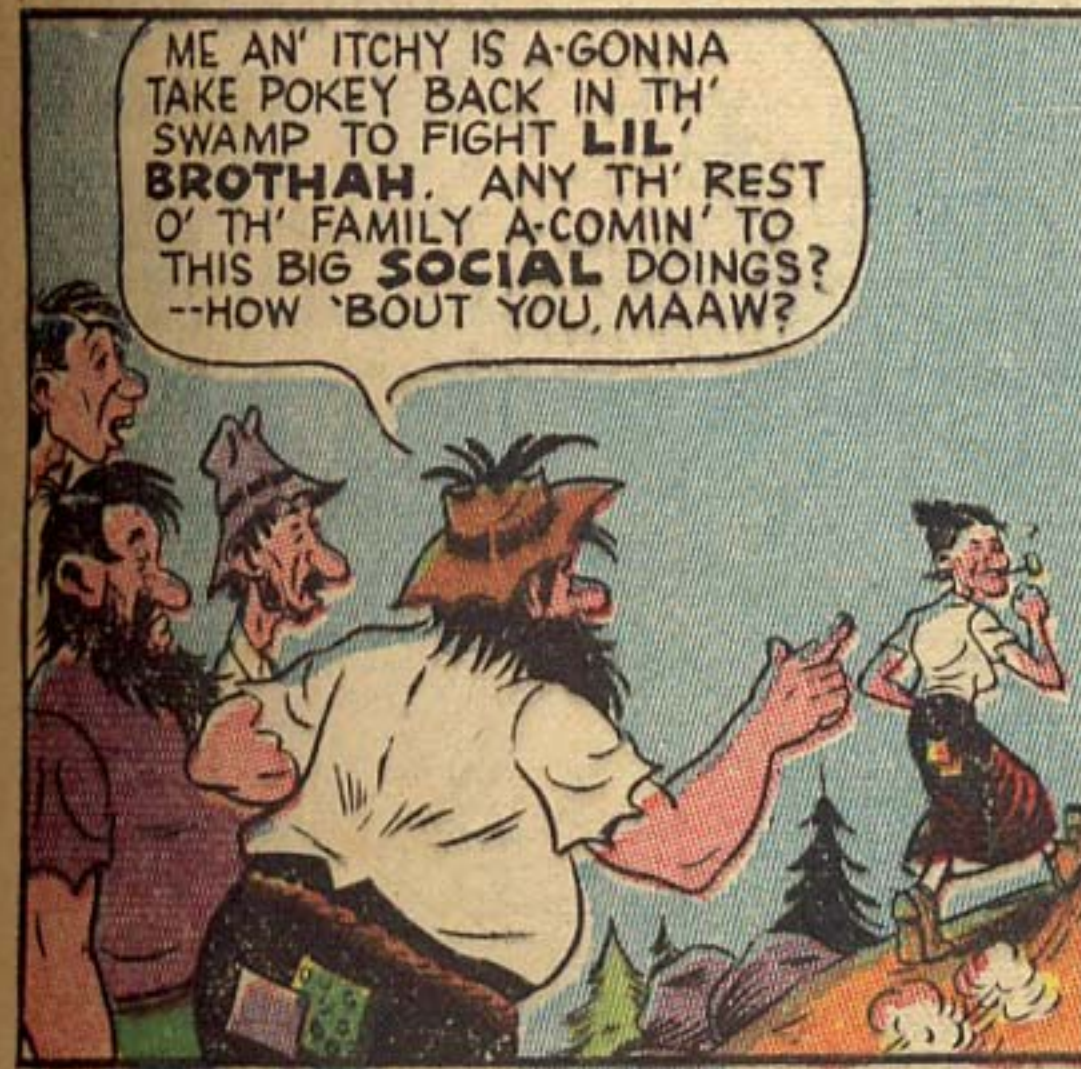
-E-ELSE WHUT?!



OR ELSE YO' HAS TO **BAR' KNUCKLE FIGHT** WIFF MAH LIL' BROTHAH!



NOW YO' IS TALKIN' MAH **LANG-WEDGE!** LIL' BROTHAHS IS MAH SPESHILTY! TH' LIL'LER TH' BETTAH! YESSUH!



ME AN' ITCHY IS A-GONNA TAKE POKEY BACK IN TH' SWAMP TO FIGHT **LIL' BROTHAH**. ANY TH' REST O' TH' FAMILY A-COMIN' TO THIS BIG **SOCIAL** DOINGS? --HOW 'BOUT YOU, MAAW?



NOT ME! YO' KNOWS AH HAIN'T BEEN ON SPEAKIN' TERMS WIFF LIL' BROTHAH SINCE TH' DAY HE **BLEW OFF** YO' PO' PAPPY'S **HAID!**





HOW 'BOUT YO, CLEMENTINE, YO' COMIN' TO WITNESS TH' **BLOODSHED?**

NOPE! AH DONE PUT UP SIXTY JUGS O' **CATSUP** THIS MORNIN'--RECKON AH SEED ENUFF **RED** FO' ONE DAY!



WAL, HOP IN, POKEY, AN' LES GIT GOIN'!

Y-YES SUH! YO' WANT AH SHOULD POLE?



NOPE! BEIN' THIS IS TH' LAS' BOAT TRIP YO' IS EVAH GONNA MAKE -- WE WANTS YO' TO ENJOY YO' SELF!

YEP! JES' EXLAX AN' BE COMFORTABLE!

GULP!



SHO' SOME POW'FUL MEAN LOOKIN' **GATERS** IN THESE PARTS!

YEAH! BUT MOS' O' 'EM HAS LEFT SINCE **LIL' BROTHAH** MOVED IN THIS HEAH SWAMP!



WHUT'S THET?? SOUNDED LIKE A COUPLE TREES FALLIN'!!

MUS' BE LIL' BROTHAH A-ROMPIN' 'ROUND-- WE IS JES' 'BOUT THAR NOW!



HEY THAR! IS YO' **FRANS** OR RELATIVES?



STATE YO' BIZZNUSS THEN SKEEDATTLE 'FORE AH **BLOWS** TH' THREE O' YO' CLEAN OUTA TH' WATAH!!



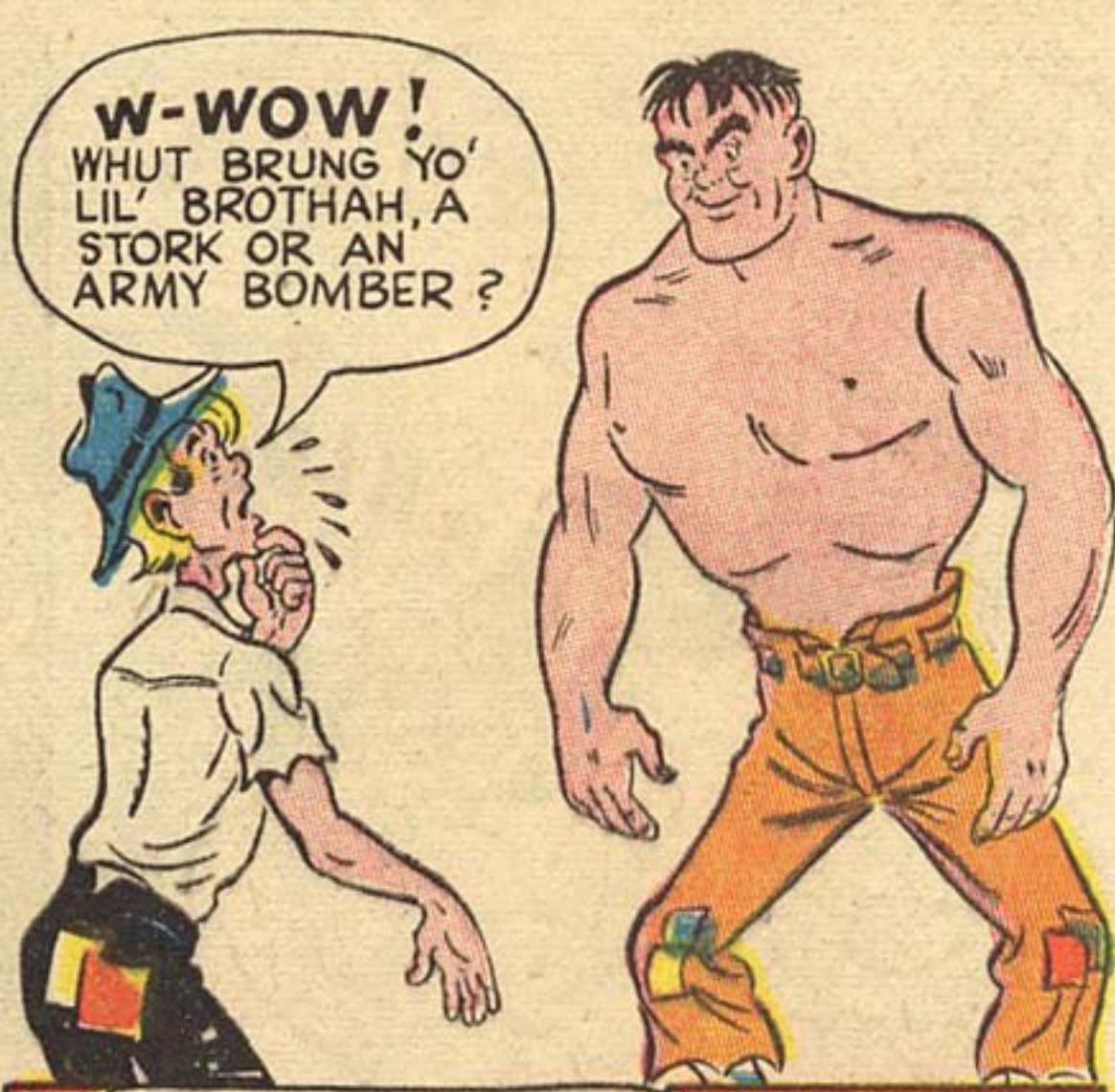
E-EASY NOW, LIL' BROTHAH, D-DON'T SHOOT! ET'S US YO' LOVIN' KINFOLK--- WE BRUNG YO' SUMPIN'!

A **BAFF TUB**? LIKE AH ALLWUZ WANTED -- TO COOK MAH VITTELS IN?



NOPE! WE GOT YO' A GENT'MAN TO BAR' KNUCKLE FIGHT WIFF!-- HAIN'T YO' HAPPY NOW?

**SHO' AM! PASS HIM TO ME!!**



**W-WOW!** WHUT BRUNG YO' LIL' BROTHAH, A STORK OR AN ARMY BOMBER?



DON'T JES' RECOLLECT-- BUT HE WERE A **BOTTLE** BABY!

YEP! HE SHO' WUZ---**CASE** AFTAH **CASE!!**



HOWDY, STRANGAH! AH SHO' AM HUNGRY FO' TH' SIGHT OF A HOOMAN BEIN' TO FIGHT-- AH GITS TIRED O' JES' WRINGIN' 'GATORS NECKS! **HO! HO! HO! HO!**





BEIN' YO' IS MAH GUEST POKEY, AH'M GIVIN' YO' FLUST SOCK!

SOC!



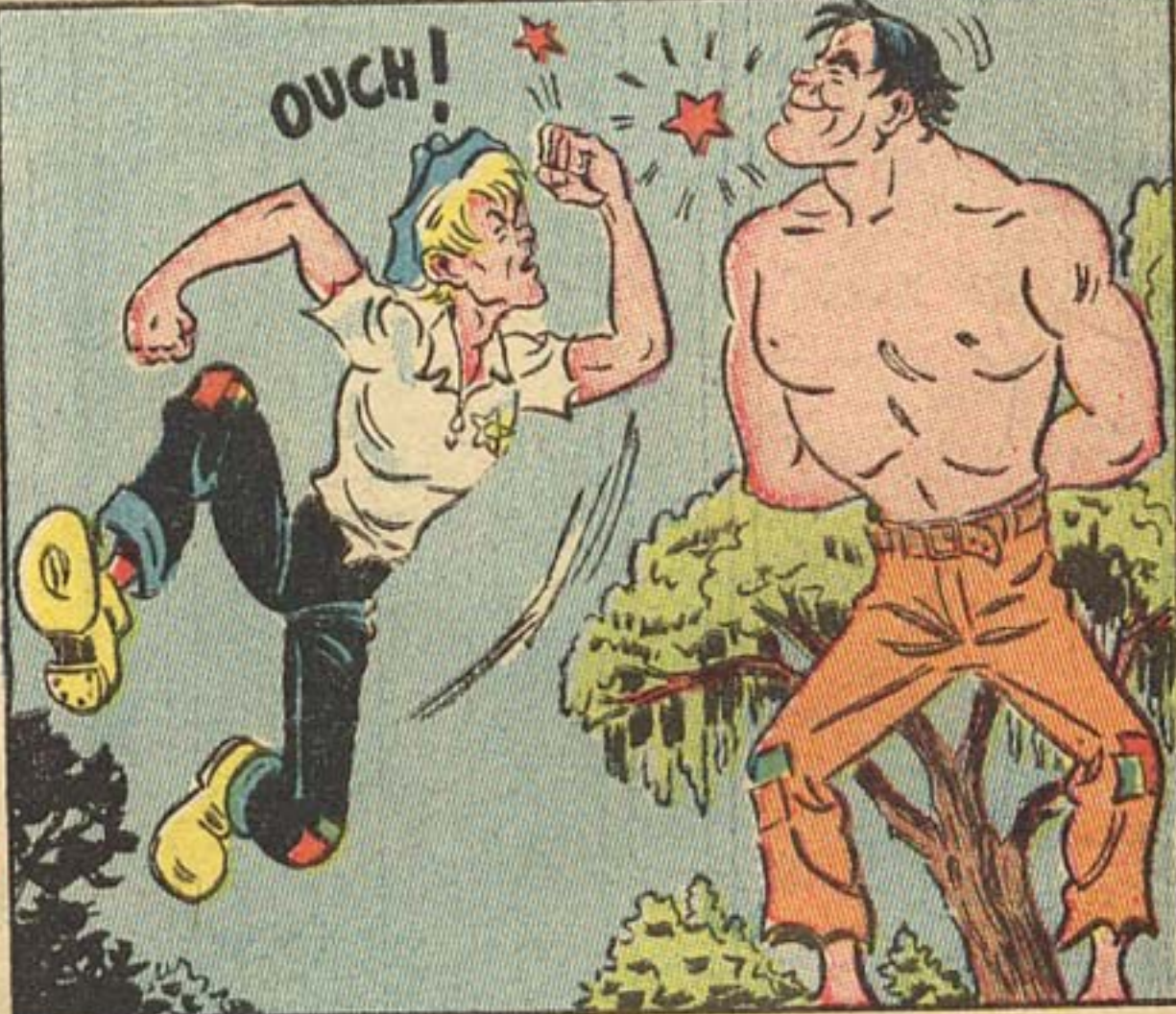
NOW LET THET BE A LESSON TO YO'! DOES YO' GIVE UP?

NOPE! C'MON DOWN AN' FIGHT!!

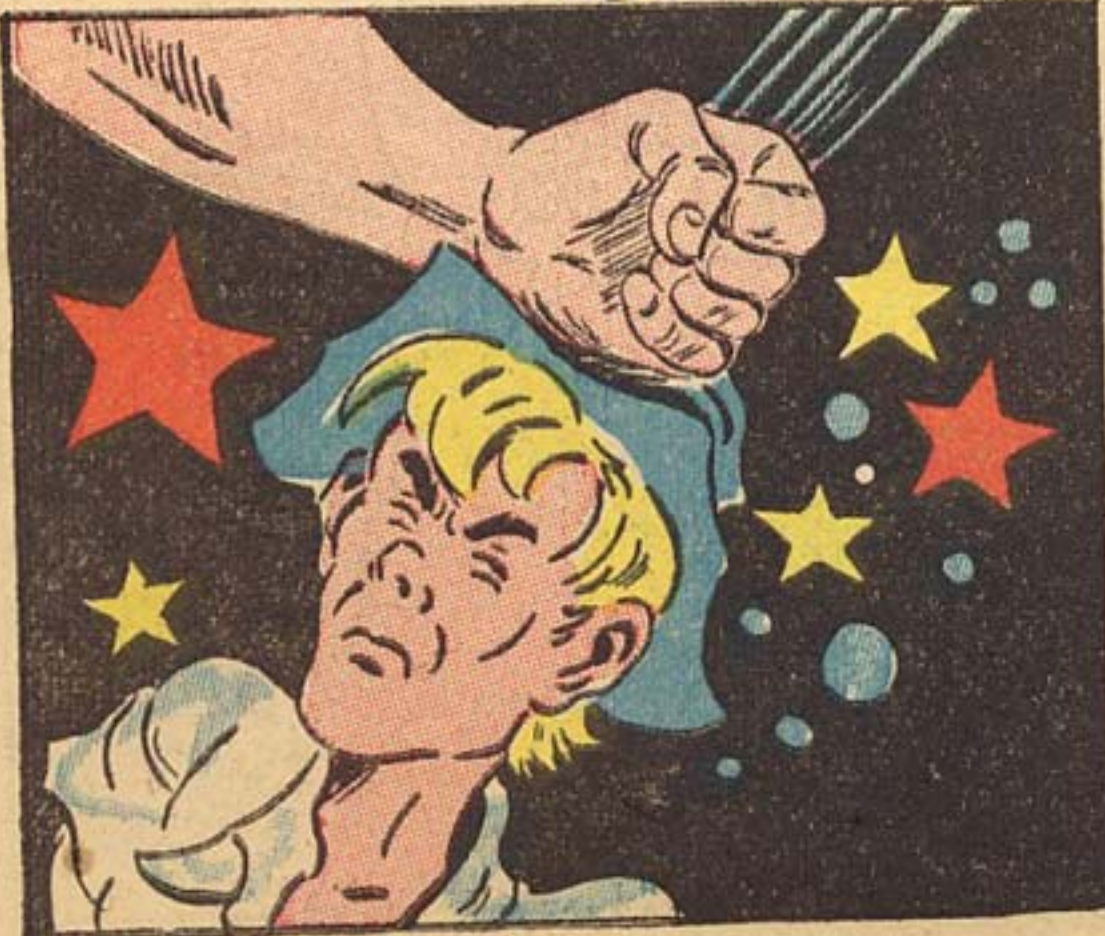


YESSUH! NO SOONER SAID THEN DONE!

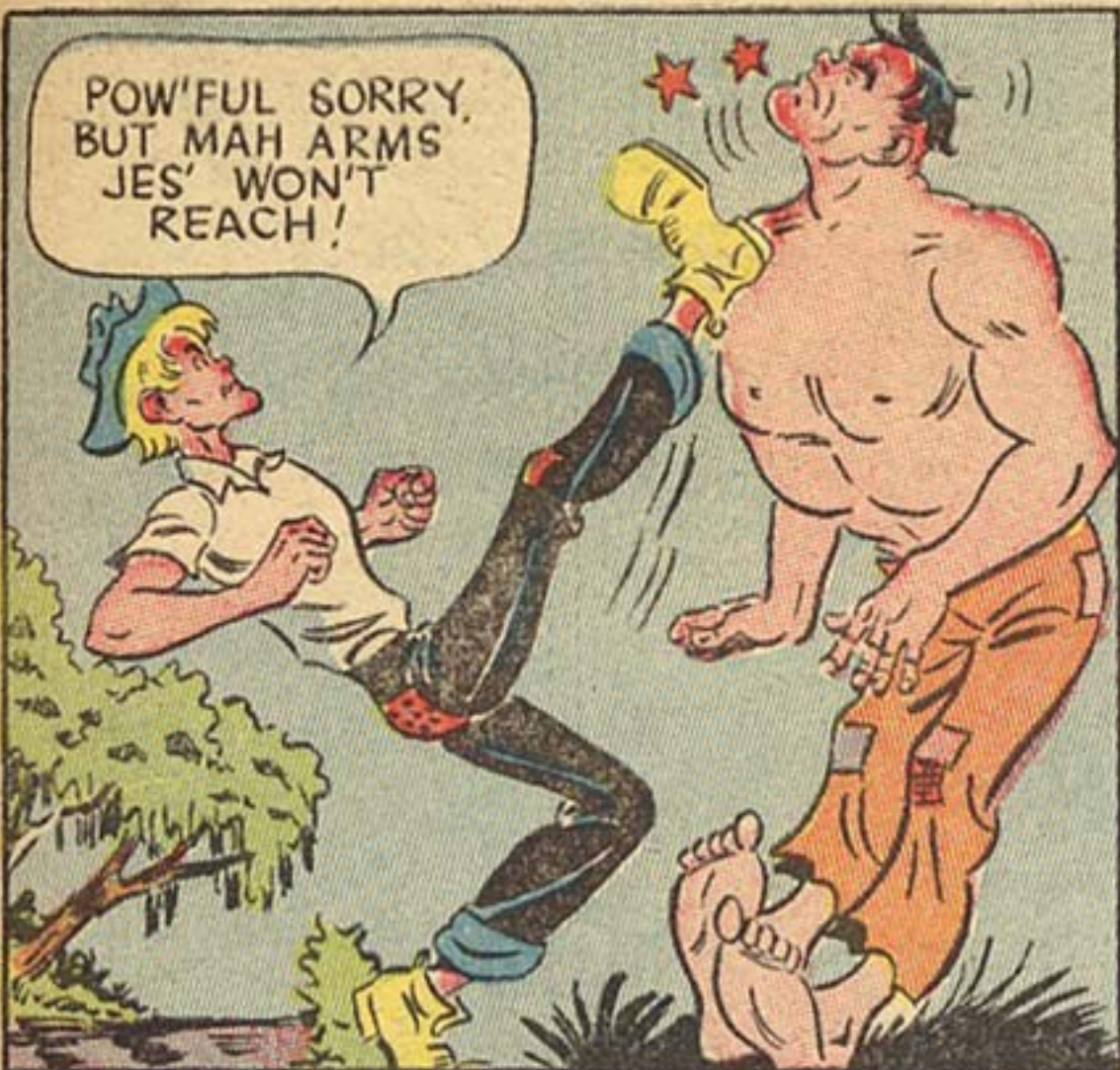
KLUNK!



OUCH!



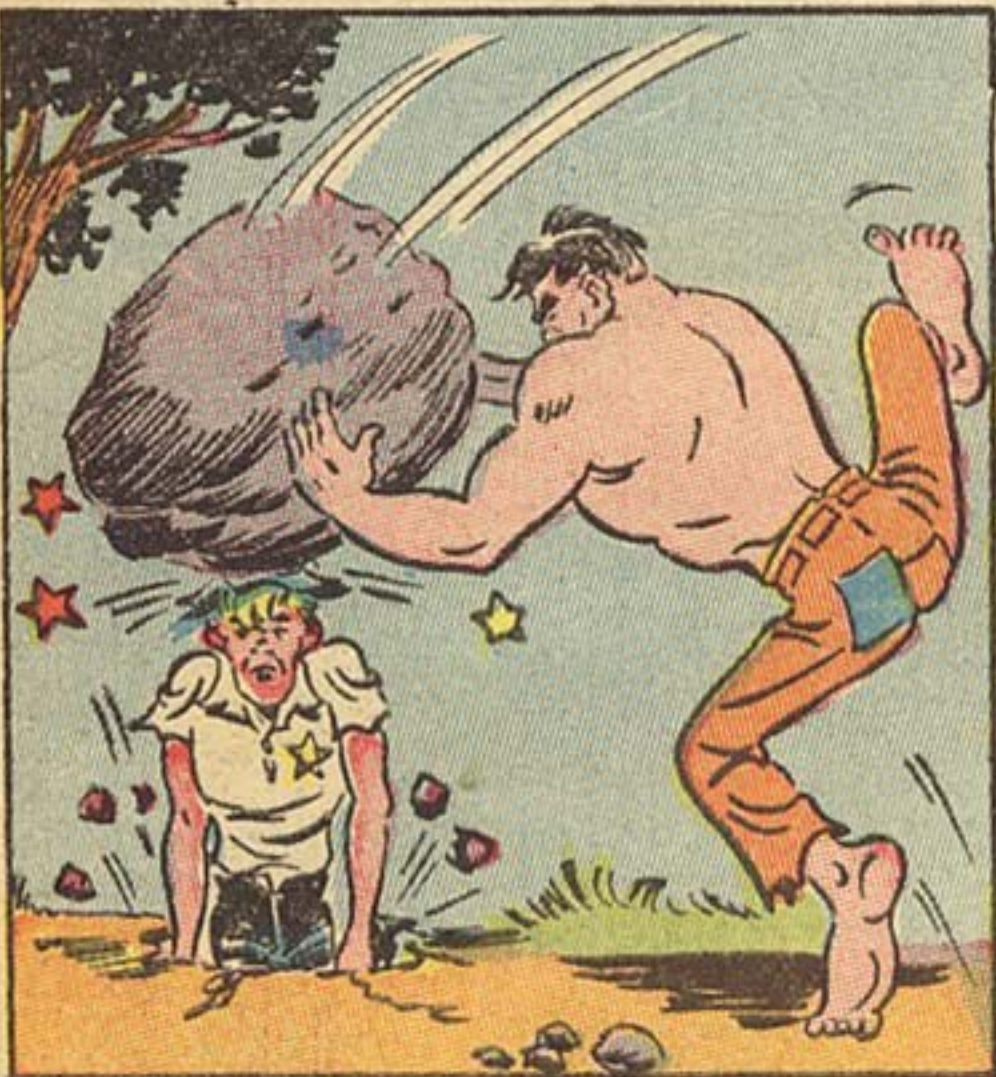
OOF! SHO' GLAD HE HIT ME IN TH' HAID WIFF THET SOCK--ANYWHAR ELSE WOULD HAVE KILT ME!!



POW'FUL SORRY, BUT MAH ARMS JES' WON'T REACH!



SO! YO' WANTS TO FIGHT MOUNTING STYLE, HUH?



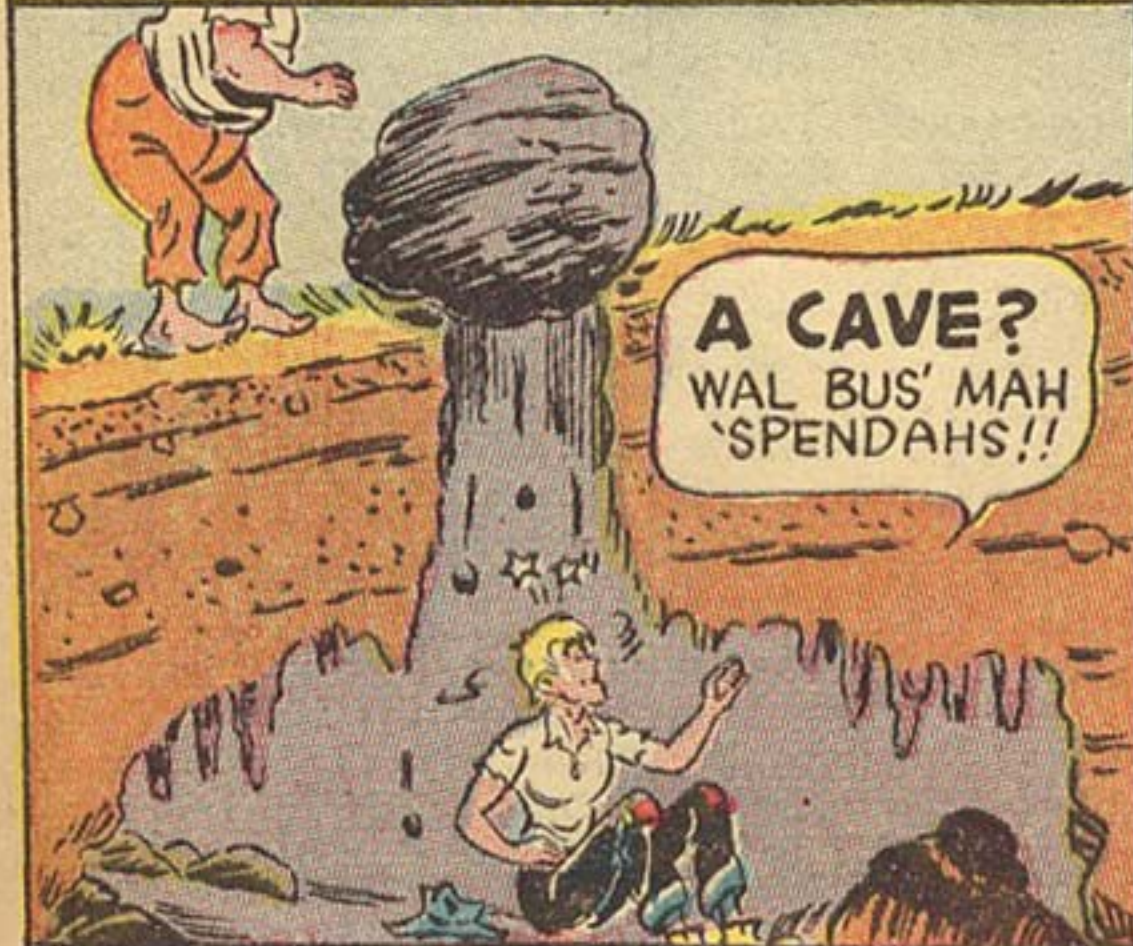
WAL, THA'S TH' END OF PO' POKEY OAKY! AMEN!

WANT WE SHOULD DIG HIM UP FO' A HOOMAN BURIAL?

NAW! BESIDES WHUT'S WRONG WIFF TH' WAY AH BURY'S HIM --- AH'M A HOOMAN --- OR HAIN'T AH?



BUT HERE IS WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED!



A CAVE? WAL BUS' MAH 'SPENDAHS!!



THIS SHO' IS A PURTY PLACE -- EF ONLY IT WEREN'T SO LONESOME!

POKEY OAKY WILL GET OVER HIS LONELINESS IN A HURRY IN NEXT ISSUE! YES INDEEDY! YESSUH!!

# READERS' PAGE

HERE'S YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO ENTER THE MOST UNUSUAL CONTEST IN ANY COMIC MAGAZINE --- WHERE YOU'VE A CHANCE TO WIN A PORTRAIT OF YOURSELF DRAWN BY ONE OF OUR ARTISTS! ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS SEND---

1. A LETTER TELLING US WHICH CHARACTER IN *TOP-NOTCH LAUGH COMICS* IS YOUR FAVORITE --- AND WHY.....

2. A PHOTOGRAPH OF YOURSELF.

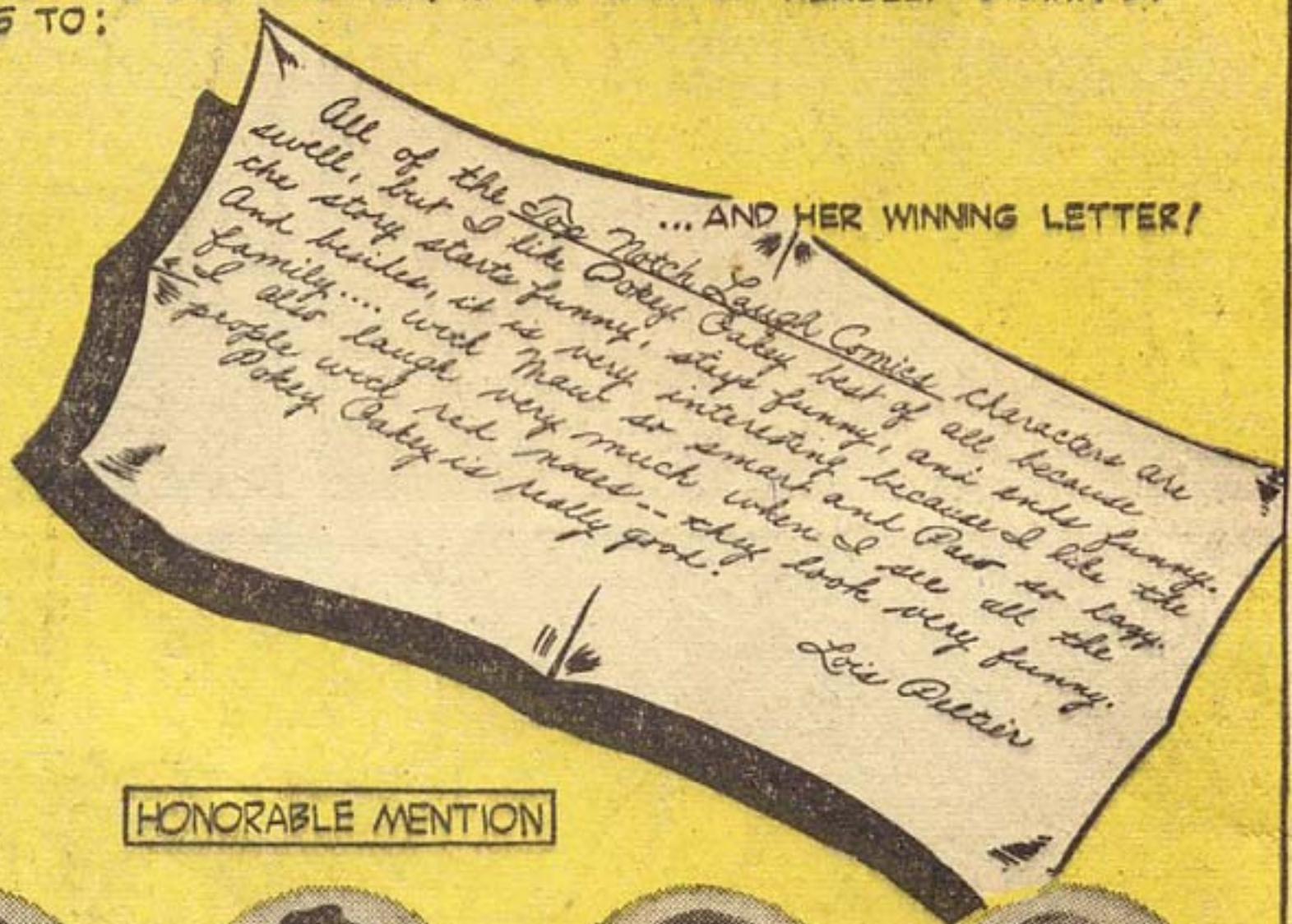
IF YOU DON'T WIN FIRST PRIZE, YOUR PHOTOGRAPH WILL STILL APPEAR ON THIS PAGE. LET'S HEAR FROM YOU!

THIS MONTH, FOR WRITING THE BEST LETTER, A PORTRAIT OF HERSELF DRAWN BY ONE OF OUR ARTISTS GOES TO:

## THE WINNER!



LOIS PELTIER  
% ROSA BARNES  
GENERAL DELIVERY  
BARTLESVILLE, OKLA.



... AND HER WINNING LETTER!

## HONORABLE MENTION



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DONALD WIDENER  
GENERAL DELIVERY  
SEMINOLE, OKLA.

REGISTERED UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

# THE BLACK HOOD

## MAN OF MYSTERY



POWDER  
MAGAZINE  
KEEP OUT.

### WHAM

IN THE LAST ISSUE, THE BLACK HOOD FOUND HIMSELF IN THE MOST DANGEROUS PREDICAMENT OF HIS CAREER. UNARMED ON A SHIP SAILING THE HIGH SEAS—CONFRONTED BY THE DEADLY THREE, THE SKULL, THE BRUISER AND THE DUDE, ALL STALKING HIM AS A CAT STALKS A MOUSE, ALL ARMED TO THE TEETH AND INTENT ON MURDERING THE DARK KNIGHT OF JUSTICE. IS THIS "THE BLACK HOOD'S LAST CASE ???"

DYNAMITE

T.N.T.

DANGER!

COOPER

T.N.T.

IN AN UPPER CABIN THE DEADLY THREE PLAY A GAME OF CARDS...

THIS IS ONE GAME I'M ANXIOUS TO WIN, SKULL.  
YEAH, SKULL! WHAT CARD ARE YOU DROPPING?



TAKE IT EASY! TAKE IT EASY... ALL RIGHT, I'LL DROP THIS ONE.

THAT DOES IT! I GET FIRST CRACK AT THE HOOD!  
AW, SHUCKS!



HMM, SO YOU DO! HOW ARE YOU GOING TO KILL HIM, DUDE?

WITH THESE! YOU'RE CRAZY DUDE? HOW'RE YOU GONNA KILL HIM WIT A PERFUME ATOMIZER?



I JUST GAVE YOU A LITTLE DOSE OF IT! CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT THAT'LL DO TO THAT GUY WHEN I GIVE HIM A FULL DOSE... WELL, EXCUSE ME FOR A FEW MINUTES. I GUESS I'LL GO AND USE MY... PERFUME!

OKAY, MR. BLACK HOOD... HERE COMES YOUR MEDICINE!

AAARGH!  
CHOKE  
COUGH  
COUGH

THIS IS HOW I EXPECT TO KILL HIM, BRUISER!



WHAT'S THAT?

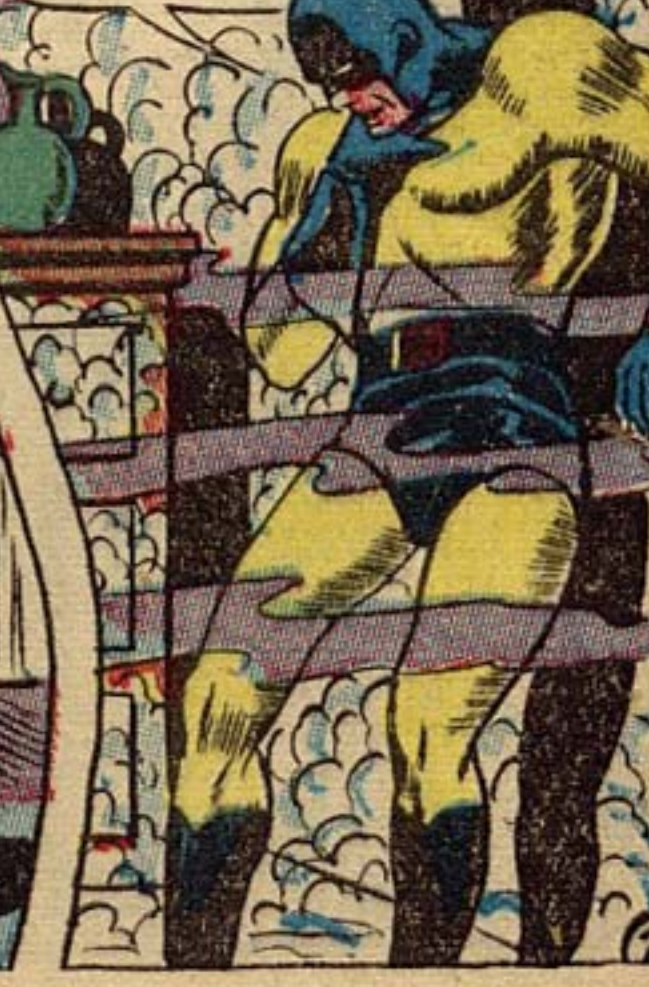
INSIDE THE CABIN...



I'LL INTRODUCE THE GAS THROUGH THE KEYHOLE AND LET HIM TAKE IT LITTLE BY LITTLE!



POISON GAS! I... CAN'T... CATCH MY... BREATH!



I... I CAN'T BREATHE. I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

BUT I... CAN'T GO OUT. THEY'RE PROBABLY WAITING OUT THERE TO FINISH ME. AND YET I... I CAN'T... LAST HERE MUCH... LONGER!

SO YOU DECIDED TO COME OUT, EH, HOOD?



AND SECONDS LATER..



WELL HERE'S A LITTLE PRESENT I'VE BEEN SAVING FOR YA!

SUDDENLY..

HELLO, DUDE, HOW'D YOU LIKE THAT DUMMY I RIGGED UP FOR YOU?



NO SOAP, DUDE... TWO TRIES IS ALL I'M ALLOWING YOU!

DUMMY, EH? WELL LET'S SEE HOW SMART YOU ARE WITH THIS POISON STICKPIN IN YOUR NECK!

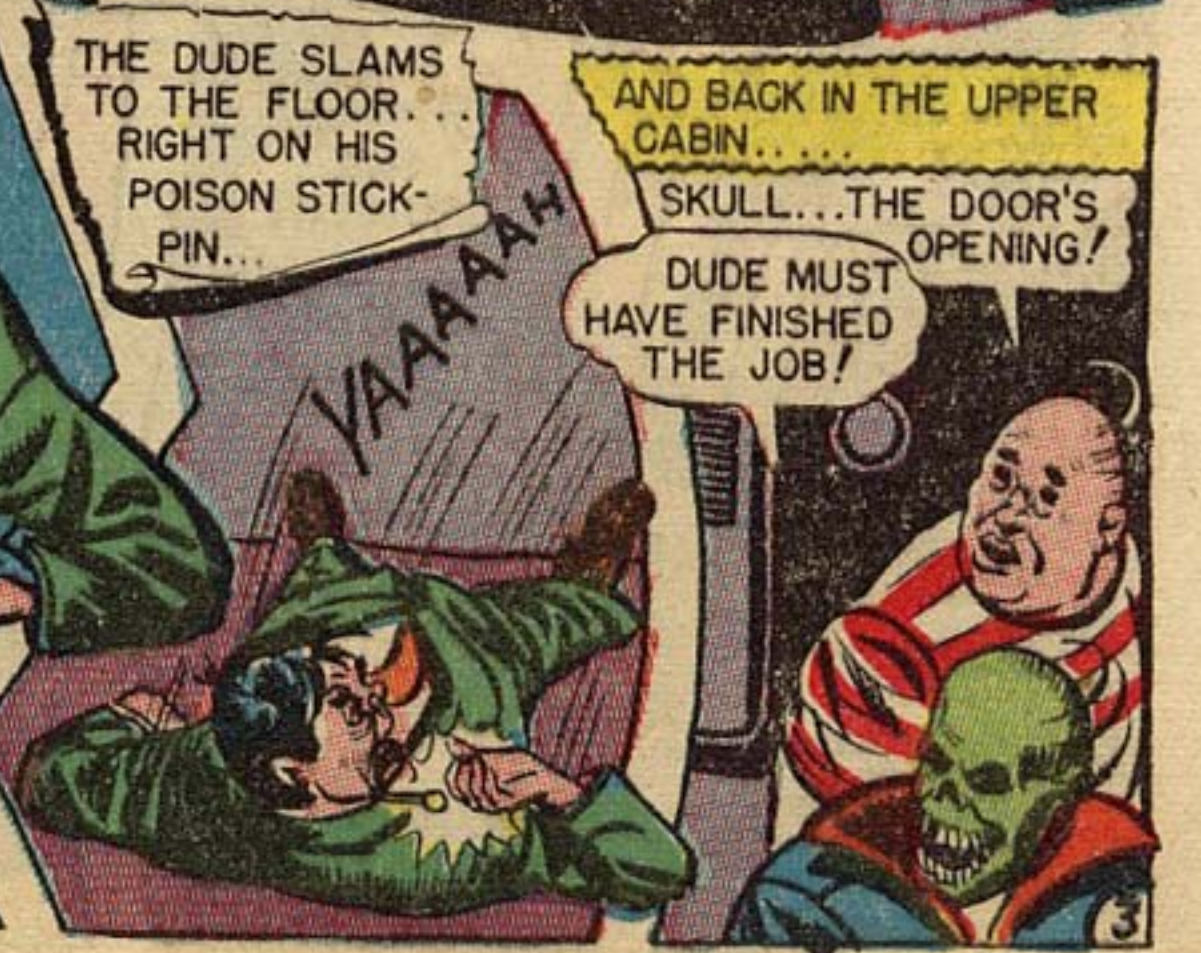


THE DUDE SLAMS TO THE FLOOR... RIGHT ON HIS POISON STICKPIN...

AND BACK IN THE UPPER CABIN....

SKULL... THE DOOR'S OPENING!

DUDE MUST HAVE FINISHED THE JOB!



YAAAAAH



DUDE! WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

DUDE! YOU LOOK SO FUNNY!

I... I...

GOOD LORD! HE'S DEAD!

THE HOOD MUSTA KILLED HIM! THE DIRTY RAT!

I'LL TWIST EVERY BONE IN HIS BODY JUST LIKE I'M BENDING THIS LAMP!

THE BRUISER RUSHES DOWNSTAIRS.....

THERE HE IS! I'LL TEAR HIM TO PIECES....

I'D BETTER GET AWAY! I'M STILL WEAK FROM THAT GAS.... WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE AGAINST HIM!

THE HOOD RUSHES BACK INTO THE LOWER CABIN, AND...

THE BRUISER!

THIS'LL HOLD HIM LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO RE-OVER SOME OF MY STRENGTH

SLAM



BUT... NO DOOR CAN STOP THE BRUISER!

NOW LET ME GET MY HANDS ON YOU!

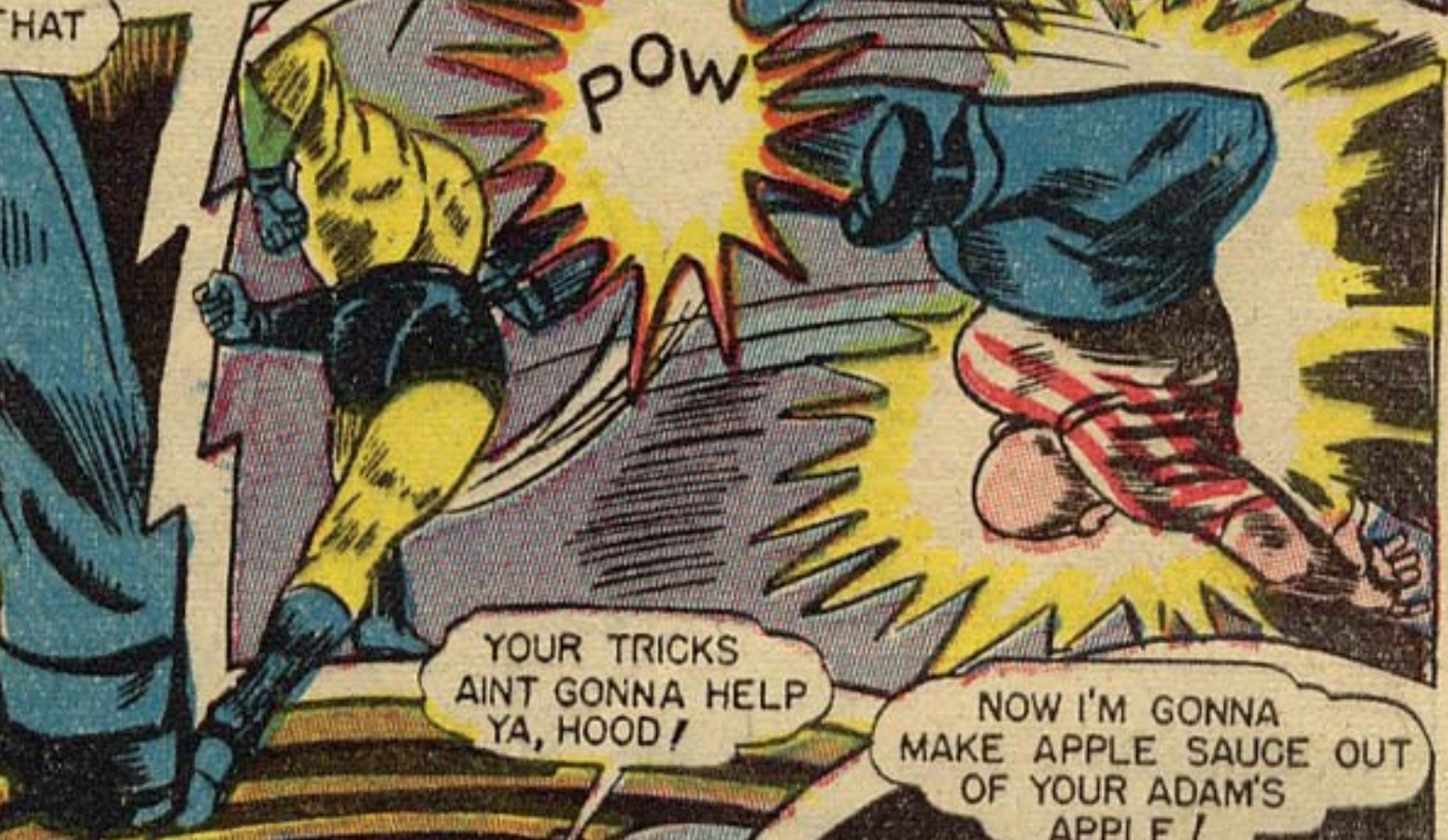
FIRST I'LL SMASH YOUR FACE IN...



SEE WHAT I MEAN?

I DON'T THINK YOU'LL GET THAT FAR, BRUISER!

POW



YOUR TRICKS AINT GONNA HELP YA, HOOD!

NOW I'M GONNA MAKE APPLE SAUCE OUT OF YOUR ADAM'S APPLE!



WHAM



UGH! HE... HE'S AS STRONG AS AN ELEPHANT. IF ONLY I COULD HOLD HIM OFF FOR A WHILE!

WITH LIGHTNING SPEED, THE HOOD LASHES OUT AND SENDS A BED HURTLING FROM THE WALL!

WHEW! BLESS THESE MODERN YACHTS! THAT MURPHY BED WAS A LIFE-SAVER!

CLUNK!

SORRY, BRUISER BUT I CAN'T AFFORD TO BE A GENTLEMAN WITH YOU!

NOW I'LL KEEP BRUISER OUT OF TROUBLE...

...BY STRAPPING HIM TO THE BED WHILE HE'S STILL OUT COLD!

SOK

THERE! THAT DOES IT!

SAY! THIS IS A PECULIAR LOOKING WATCH THE BRUISER IS WEARING. I WONDER...HMM, IT'S JUST THE KIND OF TRICK THE SKULL MIGHT PULL AT THAT!



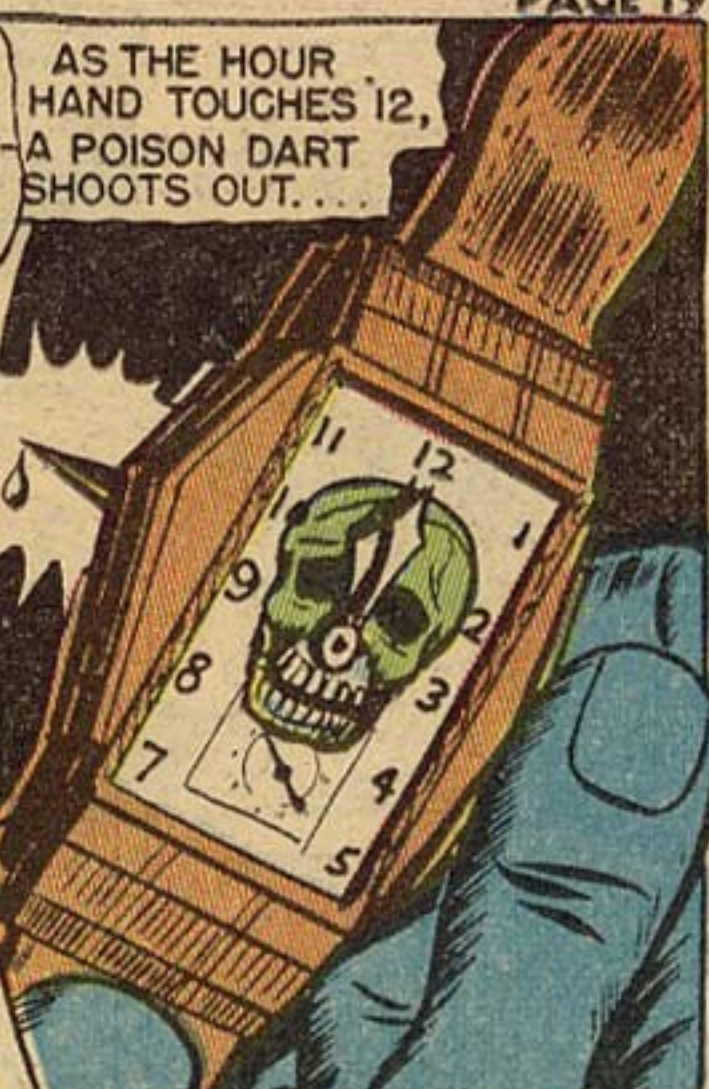
HOOD! I'LL KILL YA YET!  
SO HELP ME I WILL!

HEY!  
WHAT'RE  
YA DO-  
ING WITH  
MY  
WATCH?

THE BRUISER  
REVIVES...



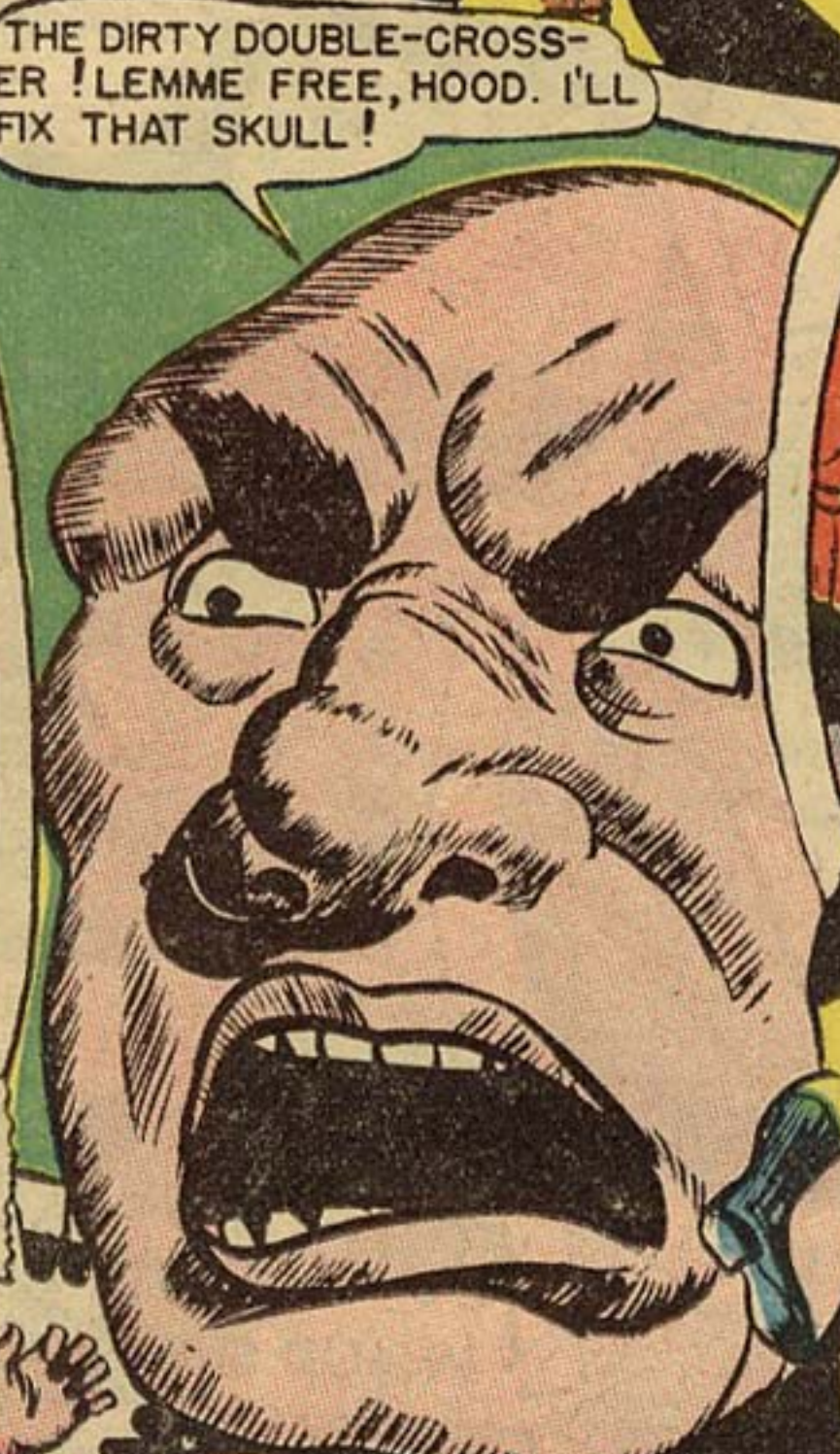
THE SKULL GAVE YOU THIS WATCH,  
DIDN'T HE BRUISER? I'M GOING TO  
TURN THIS HOUR HAND. WATCH CLOSE-  
LY AND SEE WHAT  
HAPPENS!



AS THE HOUR  
HAND TOUCHES 12,  
A POISON DART  
SHOOTS OUT...



THERE, BRUISER, IS PROOF  
OF HOW THE SKULL TREATS  
HIS FRIENDS, HE ONLY  
WANTED YOU AROUND LONG  
ENOUGH TO KILL ME!



THE DIRTY DOUBLE-CROSS-  
ER! LEMME FREE, HOOD. I'LL  
FIX THAT SKULL!



NO, MY STUPID FRIEND. I'LL DO  
THE FIXING. AND YOU'RE FIRST  
HOOD!



WITH A TERRIFIC  
JERK, THE BRUISER  
TEARS HIMSELF  
LOOSE....



DART AFTER DART,  
THE SKULL SHOOTS AT  
THE ENRAGED BRUISER.



I SHOT ENOUGH  
DARTS AT HIM  
TO KILL TEN  
MEN!

CURSE HIS  
INHUMAN  
STRENGTH!

THE SKULL'S POISON BEGINS TO TAKE EFFECT. A HORRIBLE TRANSFORMATION TAKES PLACE. BRUISER'S FACE TURNS TO A SKULL.....

NOW YOU THICK FOOL, INTO THE WATER YOU GO! HO, HO... YOU ACTUALLY THOUGHT I'D ENCUMBER MYSELF WITH AN OAF LIKE YOU!

NOW TO DISPOSE OF THE ACCURSED HOOD!

A DEADLY MOMENT OF SUSPENSE AS THE SKULL STANDS POISED OVER THE HELPLESS HOOD AND...

EMPTY! BLAST IT! I USED UP ALL MY DARTS ON THE BRUISER!

CARELESS OF YOU TO STICK YOUR FOOT IN A NOOSE, SKULL!

NOW THE ODDS ARE A LITTLE BETTER, SKULL! ONE AGAINST ONE!

YOU'LL STILL DIE!

WHOP

NOT IF YOU KEEP STICKING YOUR CHIN OUT, I WON'T!

YOUR END OF THE HUNT IS OVER SKULL!

AND MINE BEGINS!

WHAT'S HE DUCKING INTO THE MAGAZINE ROOM FOR? HE'S GOT SOMETHING UP HIS SLEEVE!

NOW LET THE HOOD COME!!

ALL RIGHT, HOOD! I VOWED VENGEANCE FOR MY FATHER!

CRASH

AND NOW I'M GOING TO HAVE IT, EVEN IF WE BOTH DIE!

BOOM

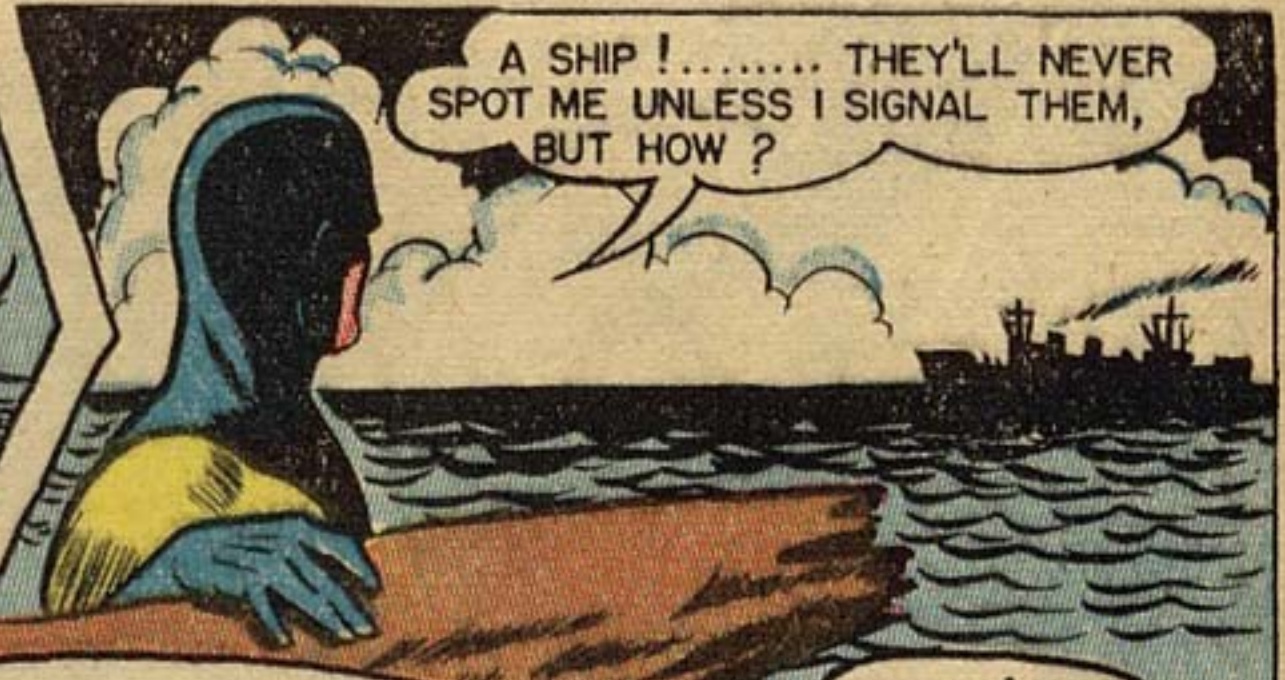
DYNAMITE DANGER

BOY!... I DIVED OFF THAT BOAT NOT A SECOND TOO SOON!

BUT I CAN'T KEEP FLOATING THIS WAY FOREVER, IF I DON'T GET PICKED UP SOON, THE SKULL MAY HAVE HIS REVENGE AFTER ALL!



A SHIP!..... THEY'LL NEVER SPOT ME UNLESS I SIGNAL THEM, BUT HOW?



WHAT'S THAT FLOATING OUT THERE? ...I'LL BE....! IT LOOKS LIKE.....



IT IS! THE SKULL'S CAPE! JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED!



AND ON BOARD THE BOAT...

SOMETHING WAVING OUT THERE, CAPTAIN!



YES, I SEE IT TOO. I'M TRYING TO MAKE OUT WHAT IT IS. GOOD LORD! IT....IT'S...

WHEW! IT'S A GREAT YARN ALL RIGHT, BUT I COULD NEVER PRINT IT IN MY PAPER. NOBODY'D EVER BELIEVE IT!

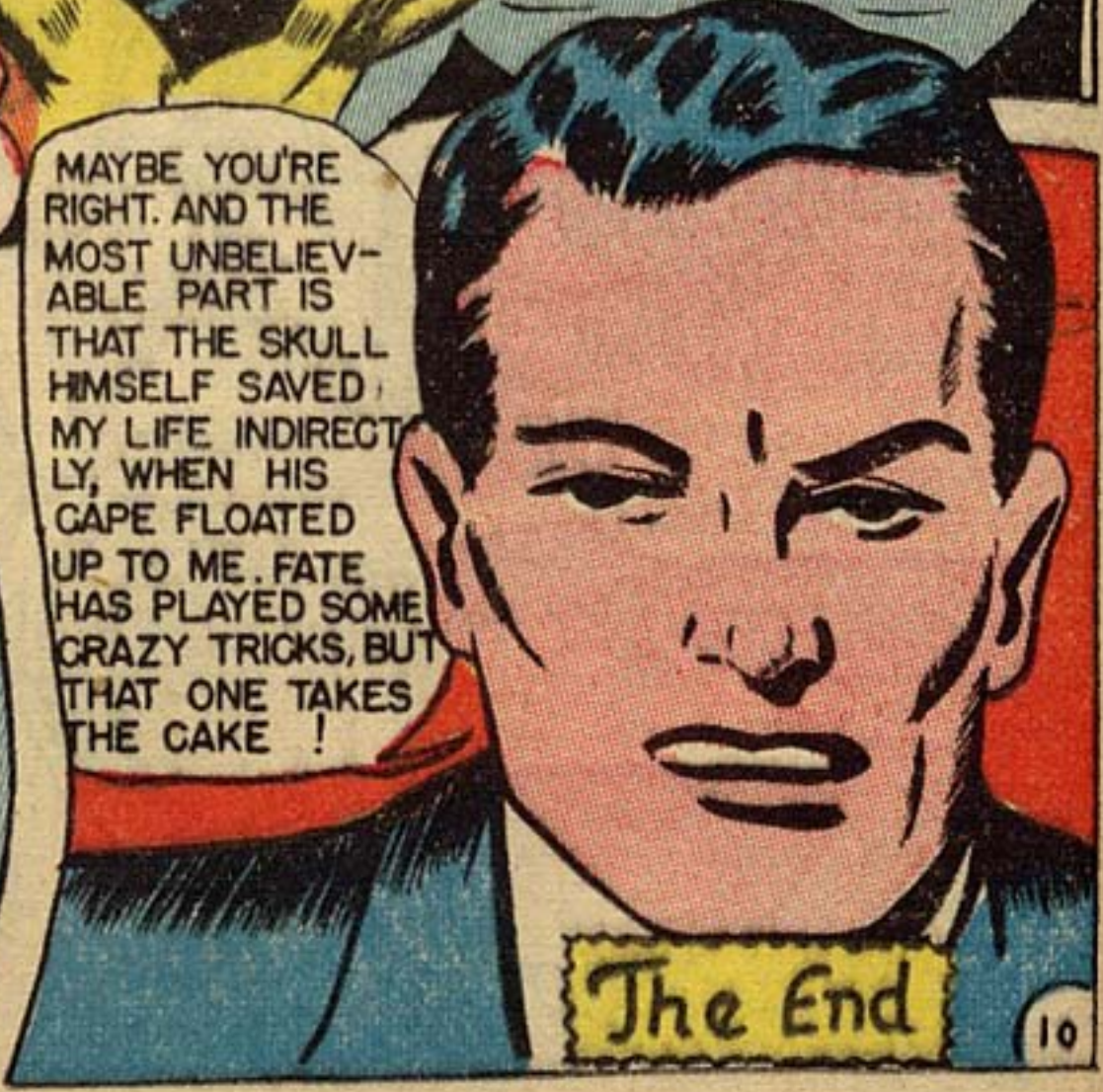


DAYS LATER, IN BARBARA SUTTON'S APARTMENT...

AND THERE'S YOUR STORY, BAB'S... THE END OF MY THREE WORST ENEMIES



MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT. AND THE MOST UNBELIEVABLE PART IS THAT THE SKULL HIMSELF SAVED MY LIFE INDIRECTLY, WHEN HIS CAPE FLOATED UP TO ME. FATE HAS PLAYED SOME CRAZY TRICKS, BUT THAT ONE TAKES THE CAKE!



The End

# POISON FOR THE PATRIOT

## A BLACK HOOD STORY

THE armed guards shivered. Their machine guns felt very cold, and the wet fog seemed to ooze down their necks. Inside the Federal Prison, the entire top floor was a blaze of light. This was unusual, but then the death chair was on that floor and tonight was the night.

Pressed against the wet stone wall, overlooking the scene, waited the muscular form of the Black Hood.

Across the street, seated in a car, Dick Graham stared with growing horror at a few words scrawled with chalk outside the prison. THE PATRIOT'S PICTURE IS IN THE MEDALLION ON A DEAD MAN. It couldn't be true!

Suddenly the lights in the prison flickered and went dim . . . again and again. Minutes later, the steel gate swung open and eight sets of stretchers were hurriedly carried into hearses. It was all over. The eight saboteurs had met justice.

And as the guards walked back into the prison, Dick Graham quickly got to work.

He searched through the bodies and grunted with triumph. He ripped a medallion from the neck of one of the saboteurs. And as he turned, he saw his passage to freedom was blocked.

"The Black Hood!" Graham snarled. He lashed out a vicious fist . . . and The Hood went down! Swiftly Graham dragged the recumbent form to his car, and churned off into the night.

"You are too clever for your own good, my friend," remarked Graham hours later as The Hood found himself securely bound to a bed. "You didn't think that the mighty Black Hood could be taken so easily, did you?" he sneered.

The Black Hood strained at his bonds. But it was no use. He answered: "No, perhaps I didn't . . . PATRIOT!"

Graham blanched. "So you know I'm the PATRIOT!" "Yes," answered the Black Hood. "The PATRIOT, the name given to you

by the Nazis for helping them arrive in this country. An American citizen, secure in Florida, helping the enemy land in little rubber boats. Yes, a fine PATRIOT indeed!"

"How do you know all this?"

"When those Nazis were in prison they did a lot of talking. The only things the authorities didn't know was who you were, and where."

The PATRIOT'S face was white. "B-but the message written on the wall outside the prison!"

"It was a trap, set to catch you. Open the medallion and you'll see it's empty!" said the Black Hood.

Hurriedly Dick Graham opened the medallion he had taken from one of the dead saboteurs. True, it *was* empty!

"So you, Black Hood, are the only one who knows who the PATRIOT really is, eh?" said Graham in a low voice. "Well, my friend, you won't know for long. I might as well tell you I have no intention of giving up a very lucrative profession—and if other Nazi saboteurs wish to come over here, I have my price! We're twenty miles from the nearest house. I doubt if a shot or two will be heard!"

The fifth columnist pulled out an ugly-looking Mauser pistol.

Hastily the Black Hood thought of all possible avenues of escape. But there were none. For once he had bitten off more than he could chew. Then, suddenly he began to speak:

"I wouldn't shoot me if I were you. The poison will stop your heart in about three more minutes. And even if I am shot, you won't have time to go far!"

"Poison! What poison?"

"Don't you feel a strange hot and cold sensation running up and down your spine," asked the Hood. "Is your throat beginning to feel parched? That's the poison—it is already taking effect!"

Involuntarily, Graham's hand strayed to his throat. Yes, he did feel warm, and beads of perspiration stood out upon his forehead.

The Black Hood continued: "You see, my friend, I knew you'd be after that medallion, and when you grabbed it your fingers came into contact with the most deadly of all poisons: 'Feretet sterben'. The victim need *touch* it once, and he'll die. And there is only one antidote . . . only one!"

Graham began to shiver. Yes, the poison was beginning to take effect now. The pistol in his hand shook violently. His breath came heavily; it was an effort, a great effort to keep breathing.

"The antidote . . . you say there's an antidote?"

The Black Hood yawned. "Yes, there is . . . but naturally I couldn't administer it to you, tied up like this!"

In a flash Graham was at the Hood's side, hacking at the heavy manila rope with a sharp knife. "Now . . . now, save me, save me and I'll tell all I know!"

Released from his bonds, The Black Hood stretched luxuriously, and quickly shot out with a powerful left hook. In an instant the traitor was lying on the floor.

Not long after, The Black Hood related his story for the official FBI record. "I knew someone was helping those Nazis, but I knew just as little as they did about him. For he was being paid directly by the German Government. All I knew was that he was called the PATRIOT. That's why I wrote on the prison wall, for although he couldn't be sure—his picture might have been in the medallion. So I watched the death house, knowing that this fifth columnist would try to retrieve the medallion. Then I allowed myself to be captured by him in order to learn his identity."

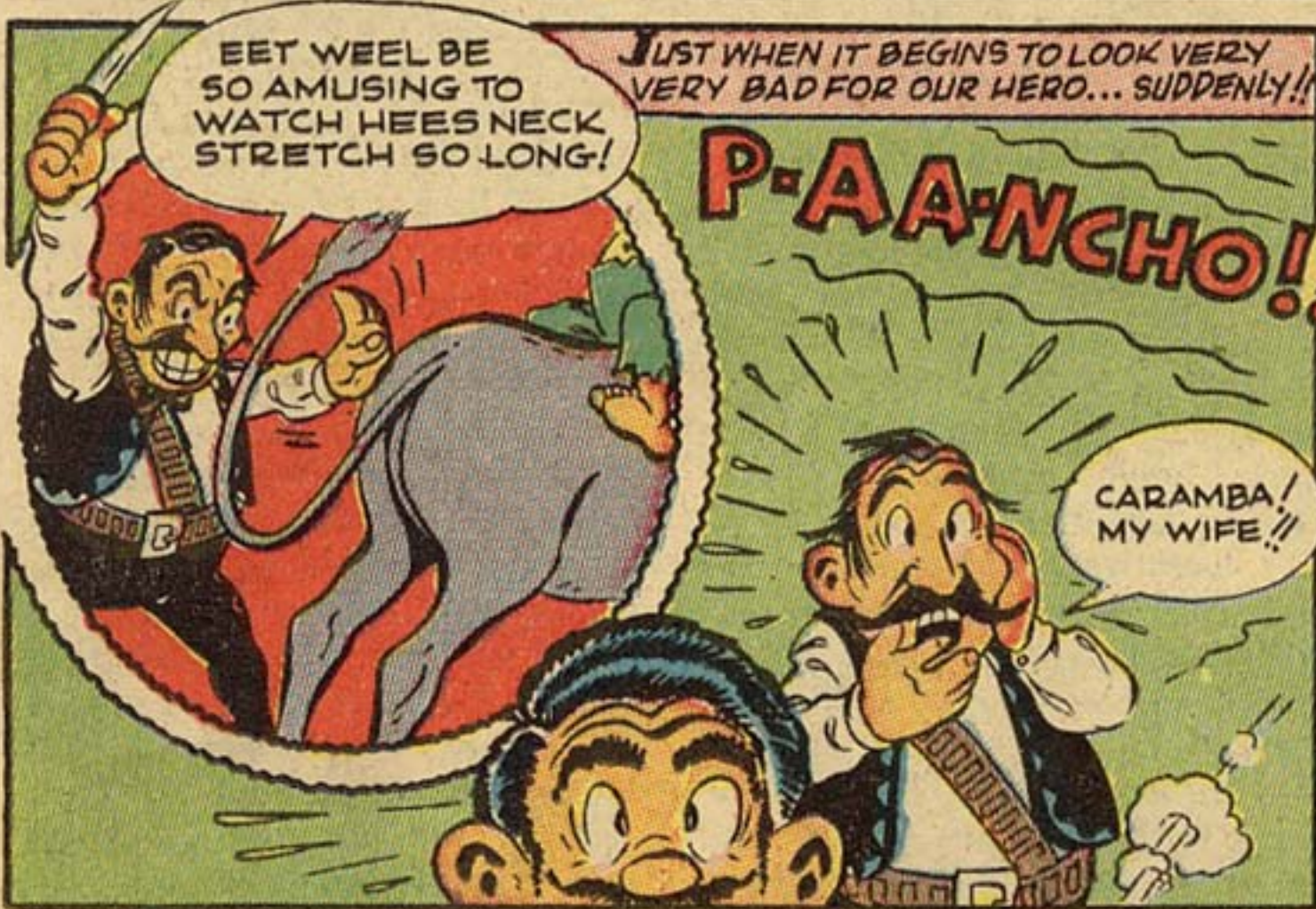
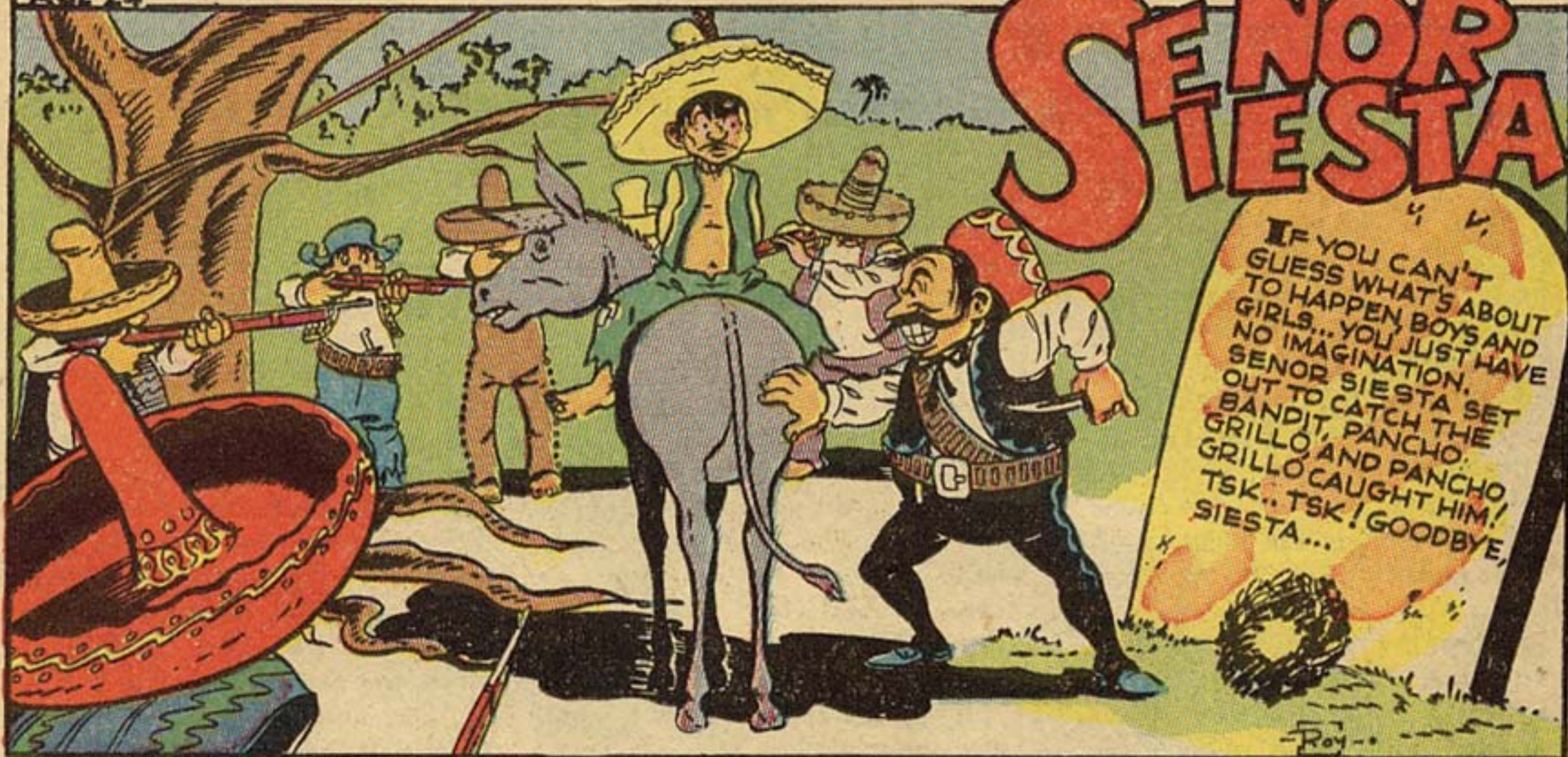
"But what was this poison called 'feretet sterben'? He kept begging us to find you, Hood, and get the antidote."

The Black Hood smiled. "He isn't poisoned. I just suggested it, and the coward had hysterics. You might tell him about 'feretet sterben', though. It's German—and means, Traitors always die."



# SEÑOR SIESTA

IF YOU CAN'T GUESS WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN, BOYS AND GIRLS... YOU JUST HAVE NO IMAGINATION. SENOR SIESTA SET OUT TO CATCH THE BANDIT, PANCHE GRILLO, AND PANCHE GRILLO CAUGHT HIM! TSK... TSK! GOODBYE, SIESTA...



EET WEEL BE SO AMUSING TO WATCH HEES NECK STRETCH SO LONG!

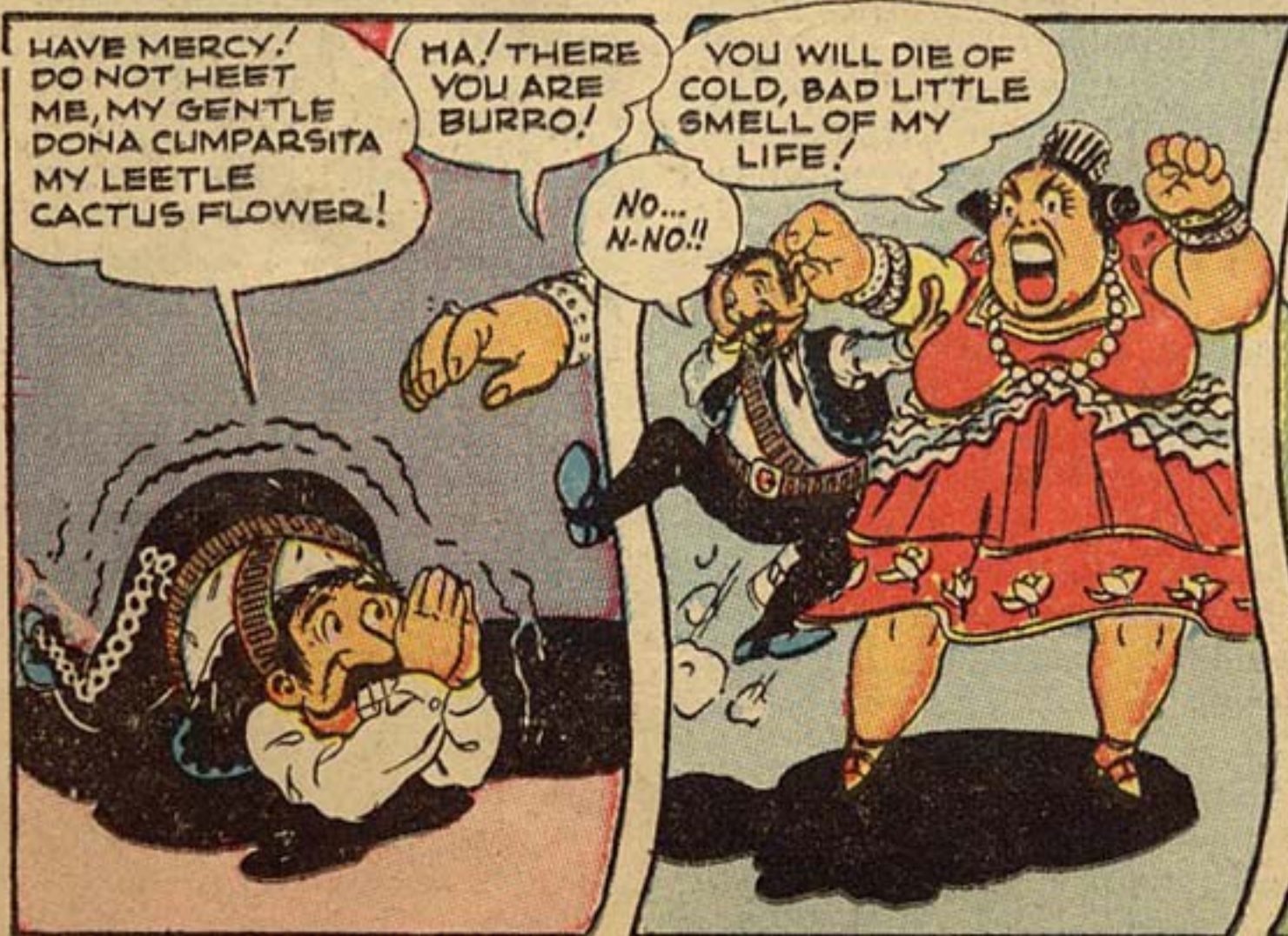
JUST WHEN IT BEGINS TO LOOK VERY VERY BAD FOR OUR HERO... SUDDENLY!!

**P-A-A-NCHO!!**

CARAMBA! MY WIFE!!



THE VALIANT BANDIT'S SCURRY FOR COVER



HAVE MERCY! DO NOT HEET ME, MY GENTLE DONA CLUMPARSITA MY LEETLE CACTUS FLOWER!

HA! THERE YOU ARE BURRO!

YOU WILL DIE OF COLD, BAD LITTLE SMELL OF MY LIFE!

NO... N-NO!!



BUT DONNA CLUMPARSITA I AM PANCHE GRILLO THE WORSTEST BADDEST MAN IN ALL MEJICO! YOU CANNOT DO THEES TO ME!

OW MANY TIME I TELL YOU TO WEAR YOUR LONG UNDERWEAR, EH! PEEG!



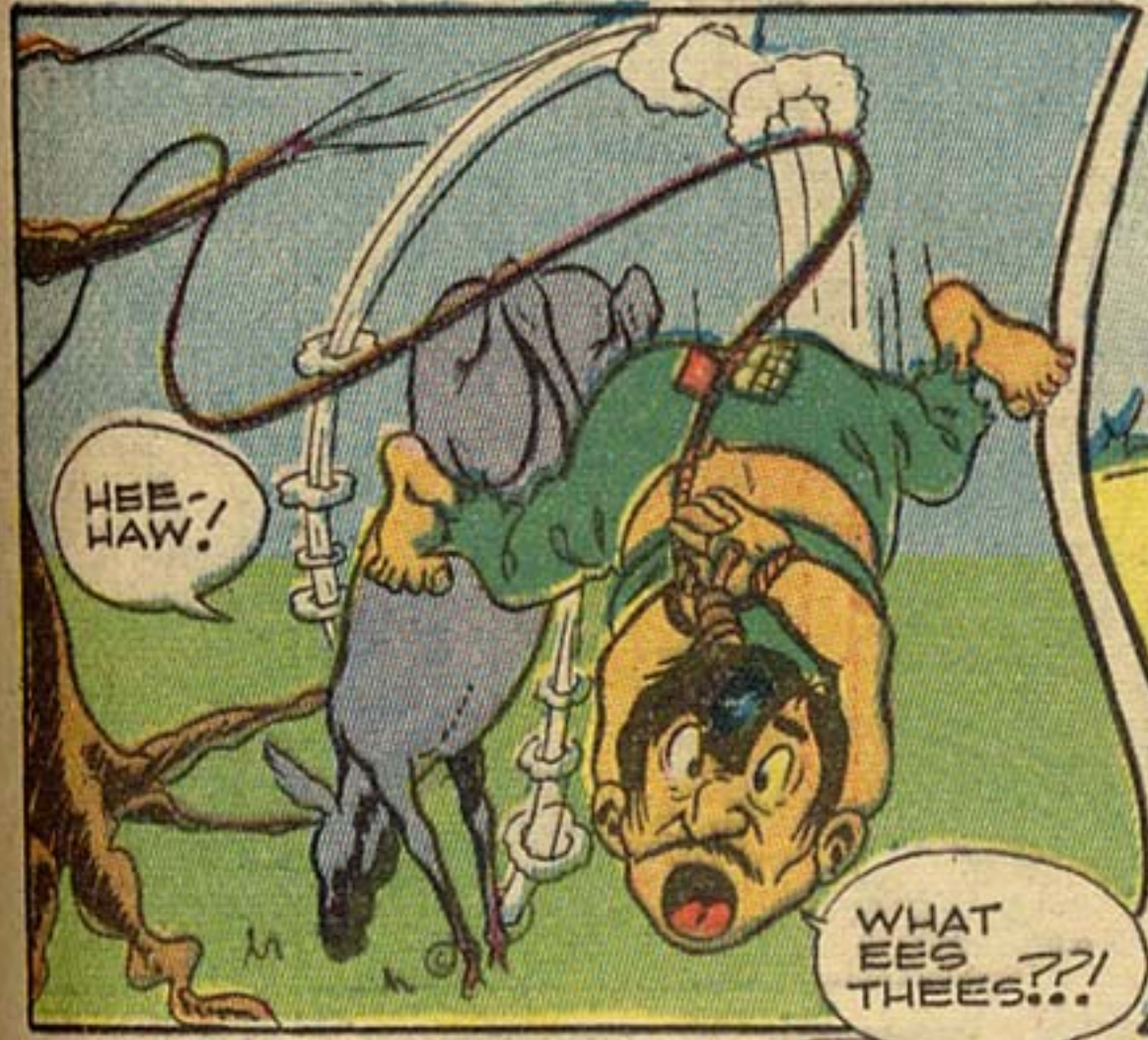
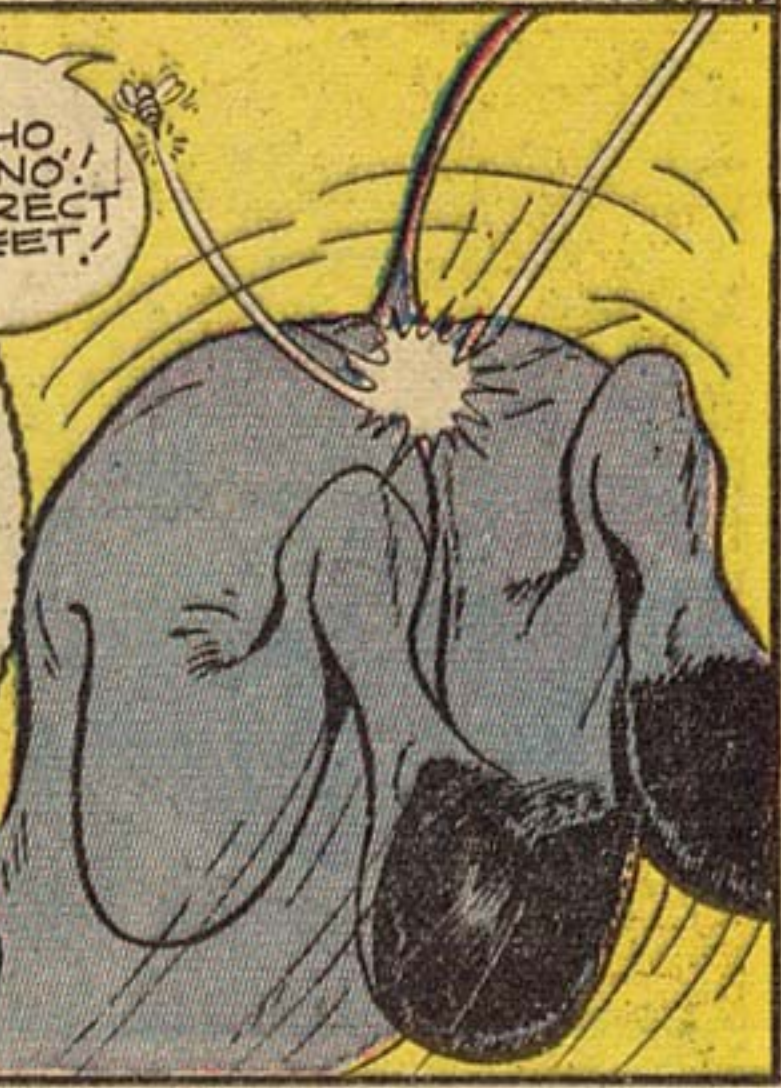
I MAKE YOU TO WASH-BANDIT!  
BUT.. WHAT ABOUT ME? WEEL YOU HANG ME OR NOT? HURRY TO MAKE UP YOUR MIND!



MUCHO BUENO! A DIRECT HEET!

I FEEL VER' VEECIOS TODAY! HEH, HEH!

AH-HA! MEAT CHILI CON CARNE!



HEE-HAW!

WHAT EES THEES??!



EES NOT FUNNEE...!



THEES FEEL NOT SO GOOD!

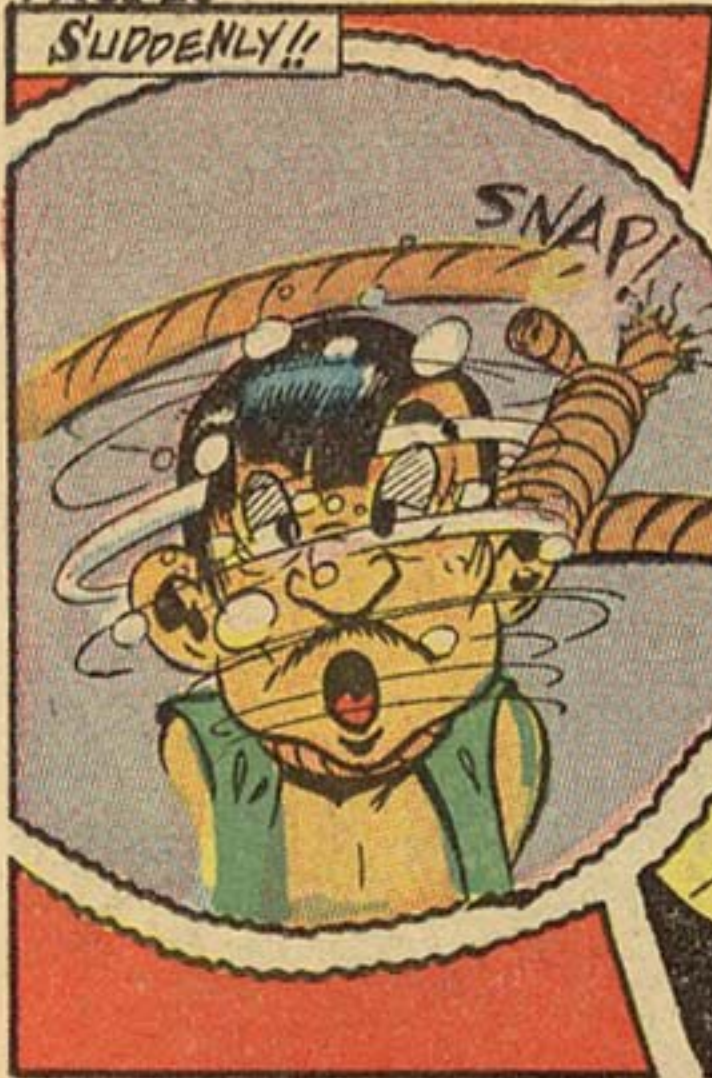


I THEENK MAYBE I DIE NOW!

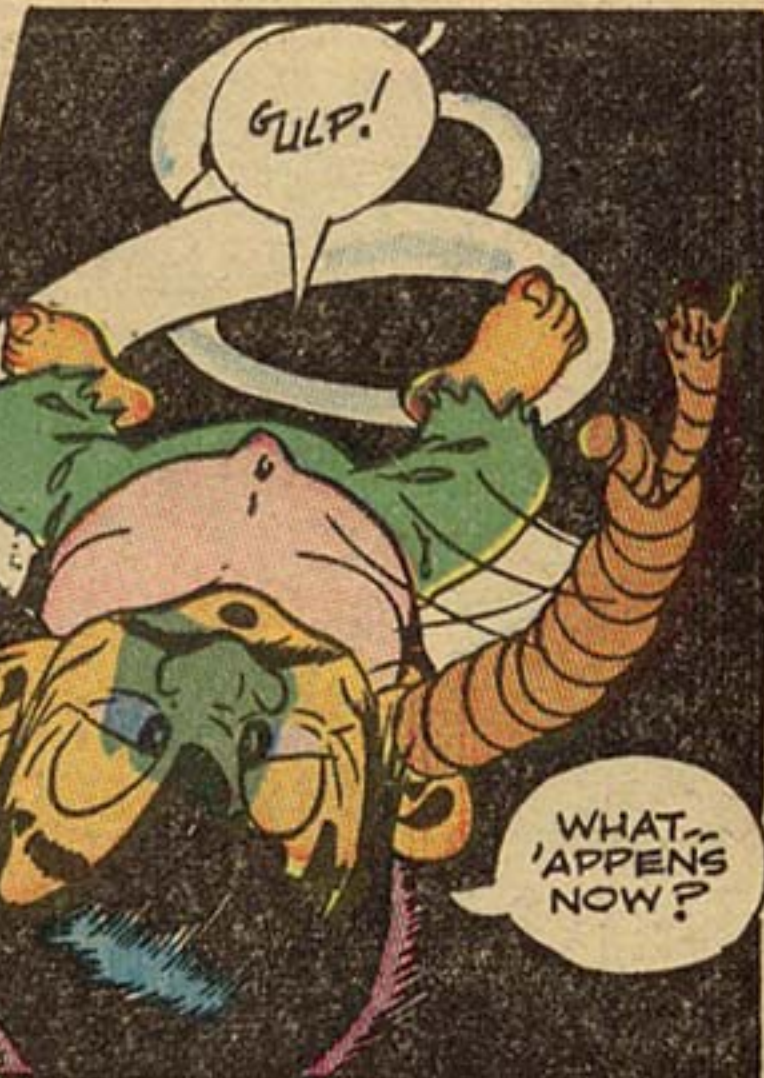


UH! THEES REMIND ME OF CONEY ISLAND! ,DÍO MIO!

SUDDENLY!!



THE SNAPPING ROPE FLINGS SEÑOR SIESTA THROUGH THE AIR RIGHT TOWARDS THE SPIRAL STEPS OF A NEARBY CASTLE!!



WHAT APPENS NOW?

AND AT THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS...



NOW PANCHO YOU PEEG... MAKE TO WASH YOUR LONG UNDERWEAR!

SI, SI MY LEETLE DOVE, I WASH!



MOTHER OF MERCY!

CARAMBA! THAT SIESTA AGAIN!

BLOP!



I FEEK YOU GOOD, YOU LEETLE DOG!



YOU TOUCH DEES CUTE LEETLE MAN AND I PUSH YOUR FACE EEN!



AW, MY LEETLE BOY... DEED YOU HURT YOURSELF?

?



I WEEEL WASH ZEE SOAP FROM YOUR PRETTTEE FACE!

?



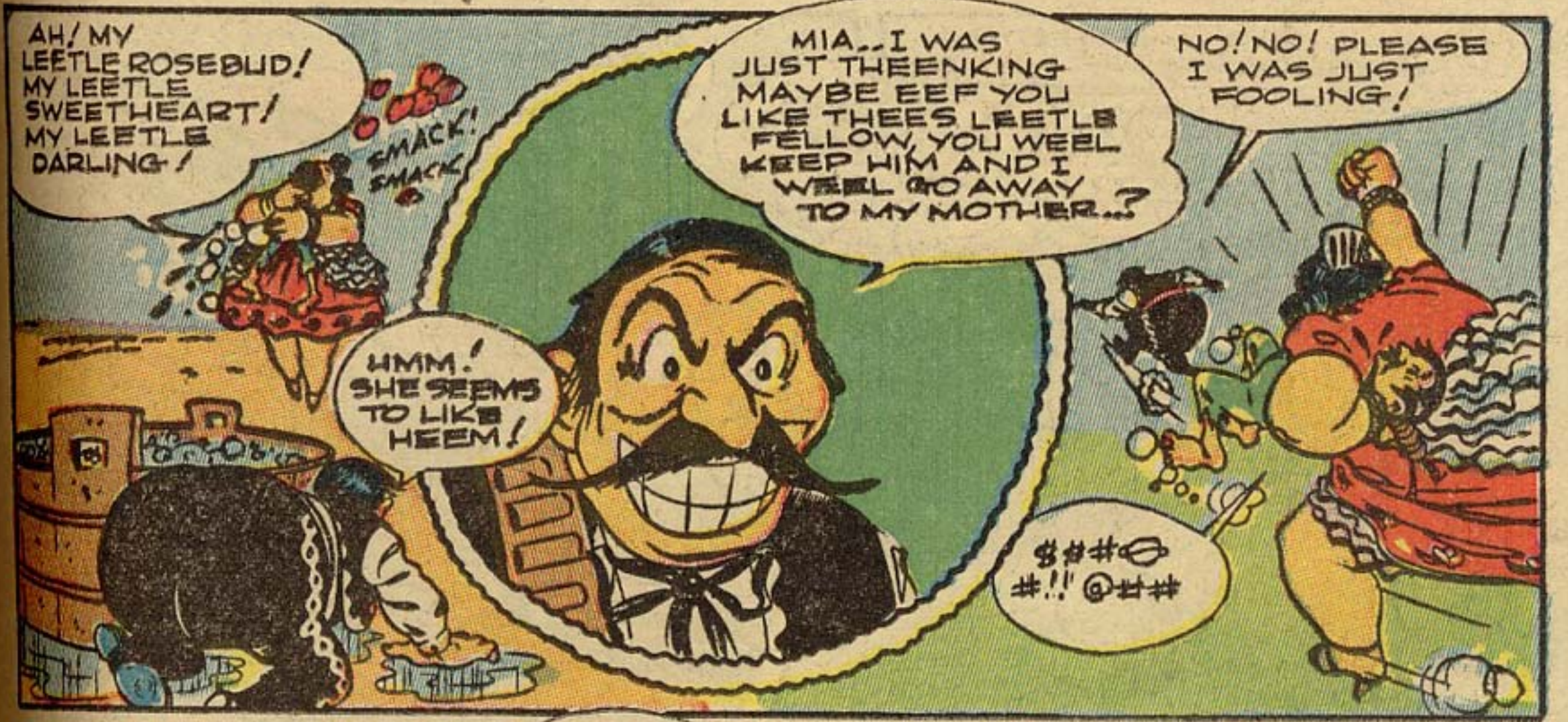
OOPS! ZEE SOAP...

WHAT? YOU ARE FLYING THROUGH ZEE AIR...



DON'T WORRY, I'VE GOT YOU!

THAT'S WHAT I'M AFRAID OF!



AH! MY LEETLE ROSEBUD! MY LEETLE SWEETHEART! MY LEETLE DARLING!

SMACK! SMACK!

HMM! SHE SEEMS TO LIKE HEEM!

MIA... I WAS JUST THEENKING MAYBE EEF YOU LIKE THEES LEETLE FELLOW, YOU WEEEL KEEP HIM AND I WEEEL GO AWAY TO MY MOTHER...

NO! NO! PLEASE I WAS JUST FOOLING!

### @##



YOU ARE STILL MY HUSBAND, REMEMBER?

PLEASE, DARLING, NO... NO, PLEASE!

DIABLO! CARAMBA! I FEEX YOU NOW!

OOH... OOH THAT HORSE WEEEL KEEL HEEM!

No! No! N!

AND THEN ON THE SCENE COMES THE CAPTIVATING, ALLURING, LA TAMELE!



'ALLO, MY LEETLE PEEGEON, LIGHT OF MY LIFE! WHERE 'AVE YOU BEEN 'IDING?

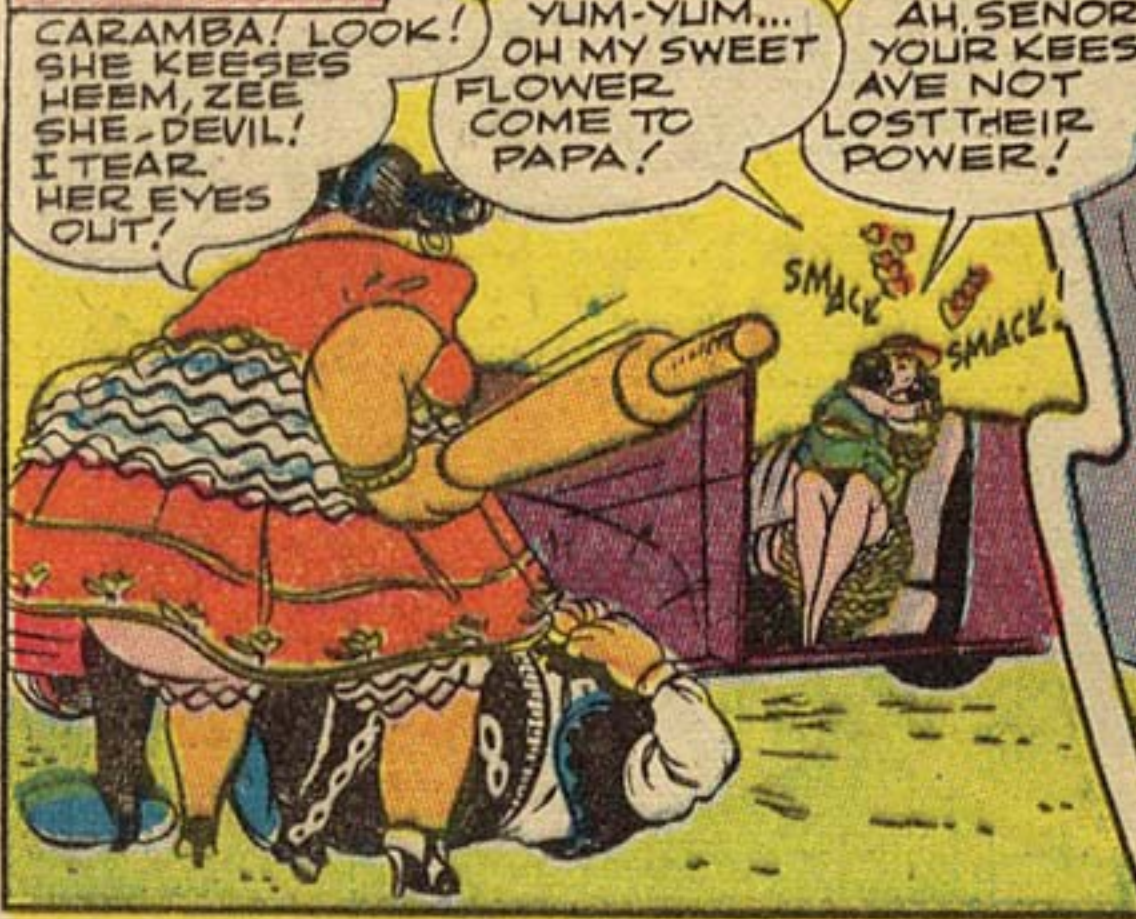


AH! SENOR SIESTA! YOUR KISSES... I 'AVE MEEES THEM SO MUCH...

AH... DO NOT FRET, TURTLE DOVE! I HAVE BEEN VER BUSY LATELEE!



BUT MEANWHILE, MRS. DONNA CLUMPARSITA GRILLO HAS MISSED SENOR SIESTA ONLY TO FIND...



SNOP

McGROOK





WHERE'S DE DOUGH, EH? I GOT DE NUMBER! LOOK! GIMMIE MY DOUGH!

NOW WAIT A MINUTE MISTER! THERE MUST BE A MISTAKE- THAT--- THAT---



BANKRUPT

SAY! LISTEN HERE YA BUM! GIMMIE MY DOUGH OR I'LL KNOCK DE BLAZES OUTA YA! C'MON- GIMME!

ZZZ---!! ULP! SOUNDS LIKE SOME EXCITEMENT!



HEY!! ALL YA NICE PEOPLE OUT DERE--ARE YA GONNA LET DIS LUG GIT AWAY WIT IT! HE DON'T WANT TA PAY UP! WHAD'YA SAY?

YEA!

BEAT HIS HEAD IN!



THIS IS UNFAIR! I'LL REPORT THIS TO THE POLICE OUCH!

YEA! PAY UP!

RAT!

DAT'S A NICE GUY NICE DOUGH! CMON DON'T BE BASHFUL!



WHY! THIS FELLOW'S ONE OF SNAKE FELIPE'S HENCHMEN-- OH/OH!

WHEE!



YEA! YA BIG HEEL YA!

PSST! MR MANAGER-- MAY I SEE YOU IN YOUR OFFICE, UH?



I TELL YOU MCGOOK-- THERE'S A LOT OF FUNNY BUSINESS GOIN' ON-- THEY MAKE THEIR OWN CARDS AND ONE OF THEM IS FIRST TO VOLUNTEER!

GOSH!



DIRTY CROOKS!

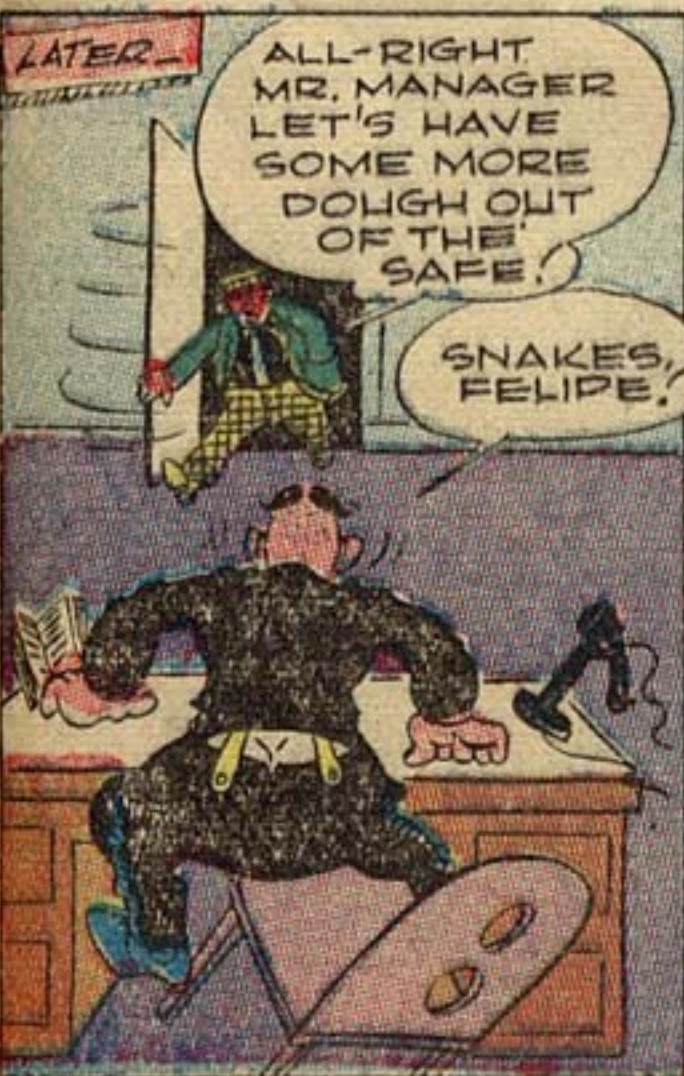
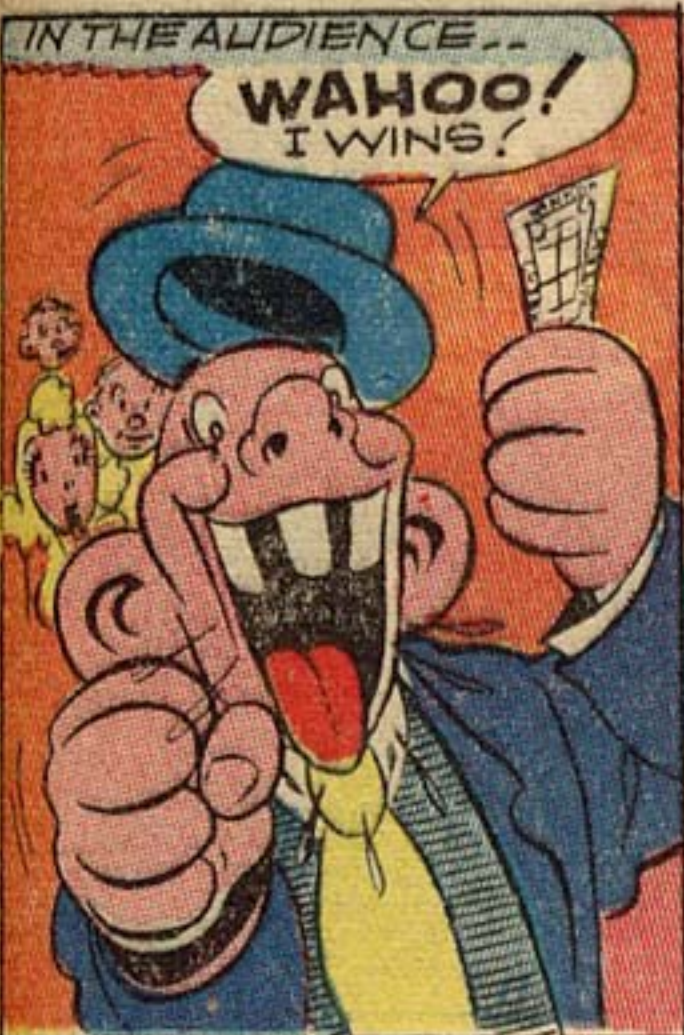
SAY! I'VE GOT AN IDEA! I HOPE IT WORKS I'LL VOLUNTEER TA-MORROW NIGHT!



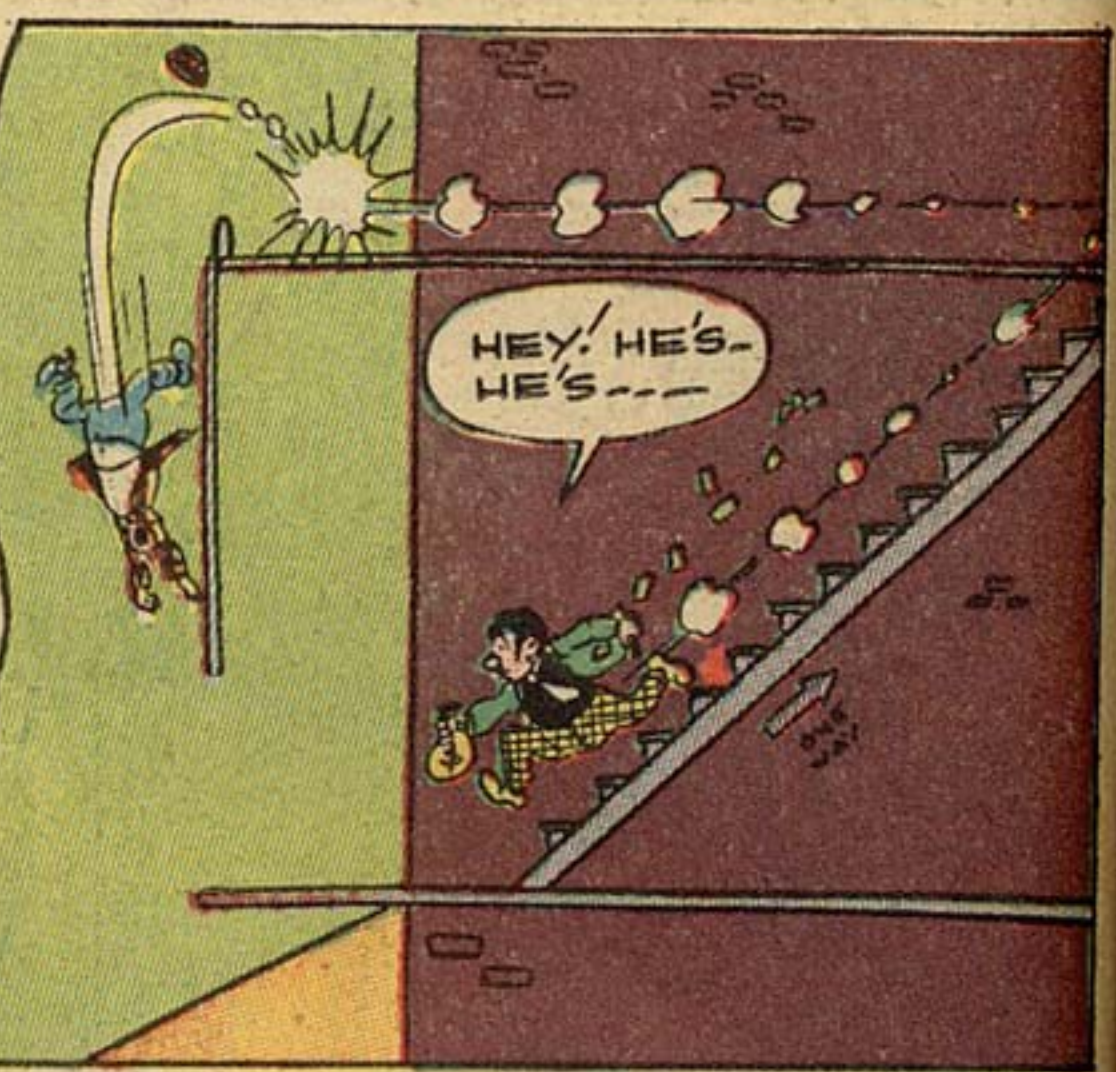
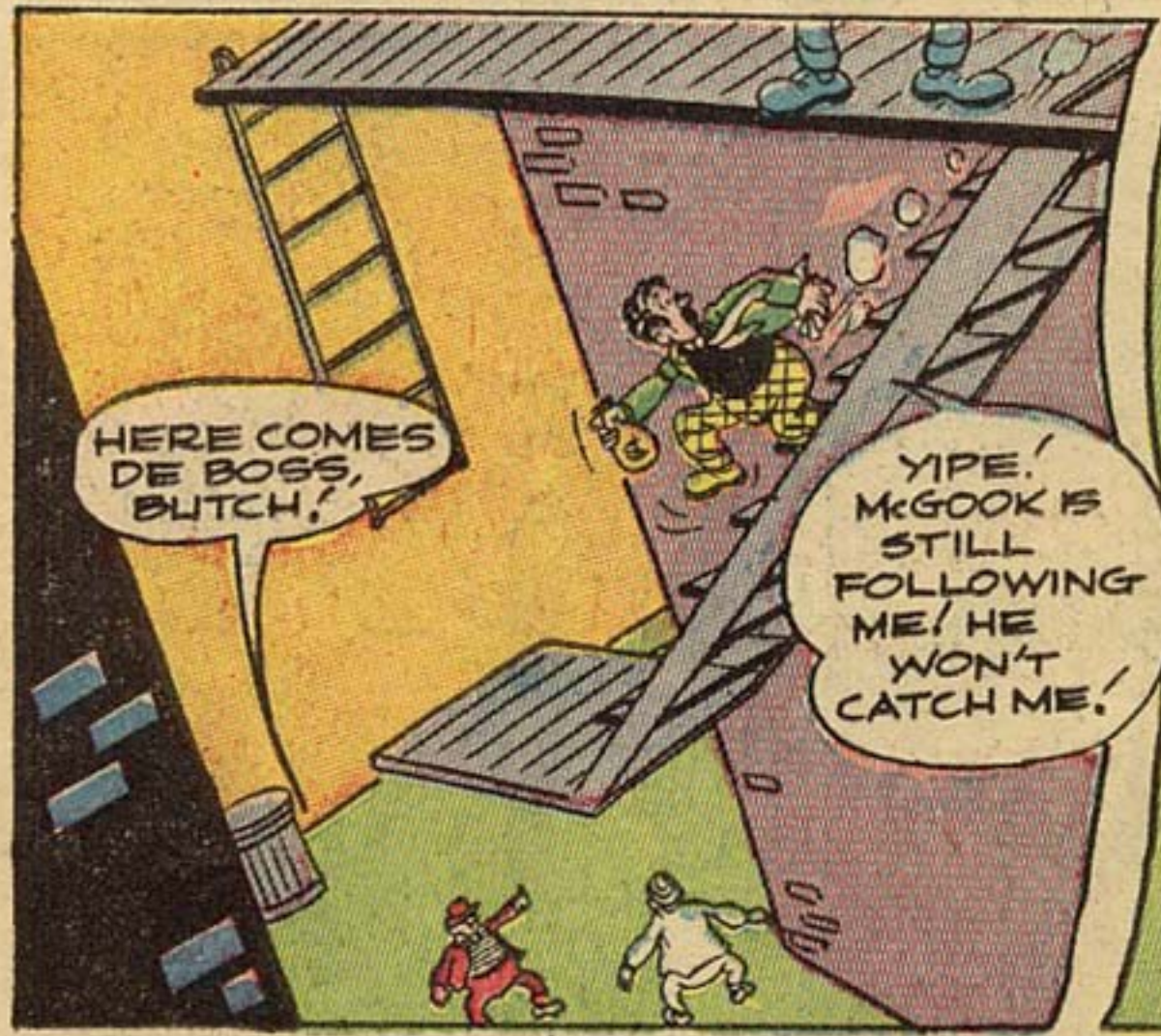
AH! MY DEAR FRIENDS/WHO WILL VOLUNTEER TO PICK THE WINNER OUT OF THE FISH BOWL?

NEXT NIGHT...

YEA! I WILL MR. MANAGER!







SNOOP MCGOOK'S BEAN HITS THE FIRE PIPE

FOR FIRE ONLY



BONG.

OUCH!



FOR FIRE ONLY

YIPE! THE MAIN'S LOOSE! IT'LL FLOOD THE WHOLE ALLEY!



I'LL GET IN THIS NICE LITTLE ASH-CAN WITH THE REST OF THE GARBAGE!



CALLING ALL COPS! CALLING---

SWIM FOR IT, BOYS-- WE GOTTA GET OUTA HERE!

I'M DROWNING!

I'M ALL WET BOSS!



HA! HA! THERE THEY ARE! JOY RIDING AGAIN, EH SNAKES?

GET THE MITTS UP!



REACH HIGH, SNAKES FELIPE! WE GOTCHA!

YIPE! DE COPS!

ICANT STAND IT IN HERE OOH!



HOLY COW! MY GUN'S CHOKED WID WATER!

MINE TOO!



AWRIGHT! WE GIVE UP COPPERS!



# THE INTELLIGENT MORON

## A SNOOP MCGOOK STORY

IT WAS a brisk November day, and Snoop McGook trod gingerly down the street, his pulse normal and his corns aching. Eagerly he searched the street for wrong-doers. Crime, crime, where was it keeping itself? How could a sleek sleuth such as himself continue to uphold law and order, when law and order were holding up all right by themselves?

Suddenly the trim figure of a pretty girl in a red dress caught his eye. Ah me, if only Spring was in the air again. But it wasn't and his corns were killing him.

In answer to their pleadings, he turned into the nearest public building, wandered down several short halls, pushed open a swinging door, and sat himself down in a plush chair. Ahhhhh! It was a sort of amphi-theatre, at one end of which was a platform flanked by glassed-in booths. Yes, gentle reader, you've guessed it, it was a radio studio—and, as a matter of fact, Snoop had arrived just in time for: I TELL 'EM, YOU SPELL 'EM, the latest type of quiz show.

As the announcer explained to the audience what the show was all about, Snoop surreptitiously slid his shoes off. Oh, mother of mice! What a heavenly relief! His corns stopped their polo match, and settled down to a little quiet session of batting each other with mallets.

People were being chosen to come on the stage for the program and spell out the words asked by the announcer. Several seemed bashful, and hung back. Suddenly Snoop noticed that the pretty girl in the bright red dress was sitting right in front of him! Well, well, what a coincidence, he thought. She was talking to an elderly lady who'd been chosen as a contestant. "If you're too bashful to get up there, madam," said the girl, "I'll go for you!" "Oh, would you?" cried the old lady nervously. "That would be grand of you. I so hate getting up in

front of people." The girl got to her feet, and out of a tiny purse took a dollar and handed it to the lady. "Just for your ticket," she said, "I get such a kick out of quiz shows!" Before the elderly lady could say anything, the girl had sidled out of the row and was scurrying down the aisle to the platform.

Something small and hard had fallen out of the girl's purse, and Snoop had seen it disappear behind the seat. He squeezed himself down, to find it, when the lights went out, and the show was on. Snoop struggled to find a match. At last he found one, struck it, burned his finger, and yelled out loud. An usher was at his side in a second, glaring down at him. "Sh-sh-sh-sh! We're on the air!" Resignedly, Snoop McGook settled back into his seat, his hands sticky with old pieces of chewing gum and empty candy wrappers.

That girl in the red dress was on the stage, and they were asking her to spell words. The clicking of a door disturbed Snoop's concentration. He looked round and saw three FBI men he knew, enter. FBI men here? But why? They asked the girl to spell the word "occasion". She said: "O—c—" and then she hesitated, smiled sweetly, and said suddenly, "Job done." And as the announcer stared, she quickly left the platform!

When the lights were on, and the program over, the audience discovered the doors had been locked. Consternation reigned, an FBI man was at each door. Why couldn't they leave?

All of a sudden from the back of the amphi-theatre came a shout!

"Miss, miss! I've got it . . . I've got it!"

Snoop McGook ran forward towards the girl in the red dress who, it seemed, was trying to lose herself in the crowd. Roughly an FBI man stopped McGook. Quick-

ly, our hero showed him his credentials. The FBI men were all right to be sure, but he, Snoop McGook was an equally well-known clue-catcher.

"I just found this thing, and I . . ."

The FBI men took a quick look at the item and gasped.

"Who does it belong to, McGook?"

"That girl in the red dress over there!"

"Hmmm. Can you remember enough of what she said when she was on the air to tell us?"

"Why, sure . . . but . . . I . . . er . . ."

"Come along McGook, you're a valuable man. And Mike, grab that girl and take her down for questioning!"

Later at headquarters, Snoop McGook puffed luxuriously at the expensive cigar that had been proffered him. For the nineteenth time he was telling his story: a new batch of detectives had just come off duty.

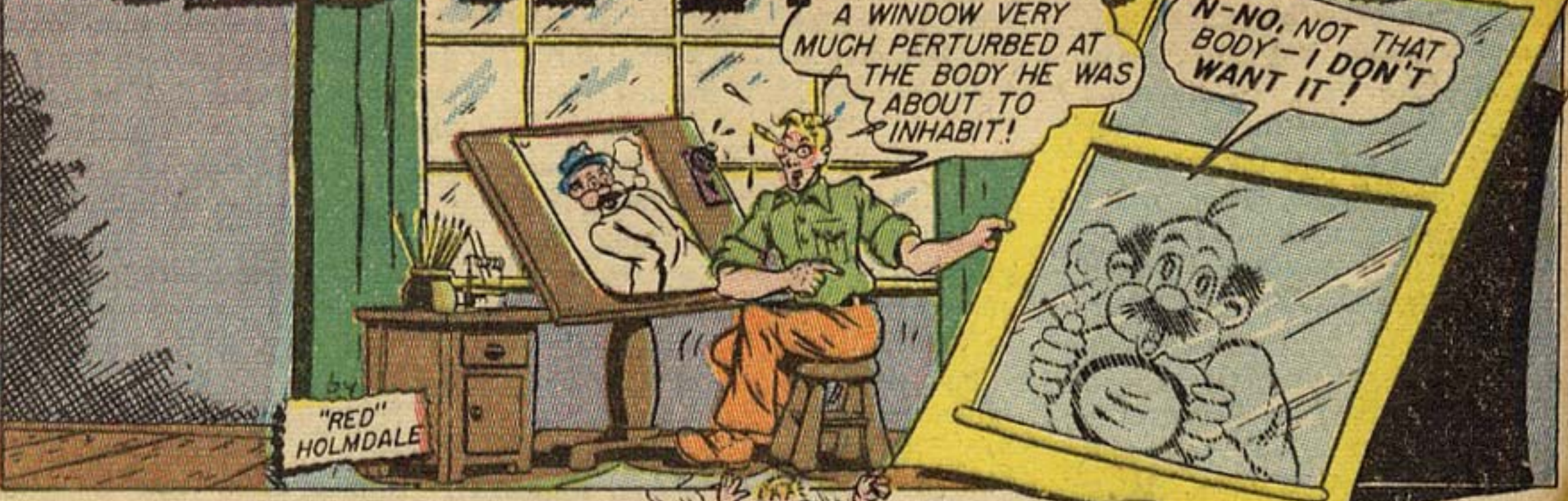
"You see boys, for some time we've been on the trail of enemy agents who have been informing their governments by appearing on radio quiz programs. I had traced this girl in the red dress to today's show, and when I heard her say, 'Job done,' I knew we had the girl we were looking for."

"But how did you get the evidence of the sabotage?" asked a rookie cop. "How did you find that valve which she stole from the bomber conveyor belt? Why, that would have held up our production for six months!"

Snoop McGook remembered slipping on his shoe when the show was over and feeling the hard object in the toe . . . and said: "Ahhh, my boy, a good detective never tells all he knows!"

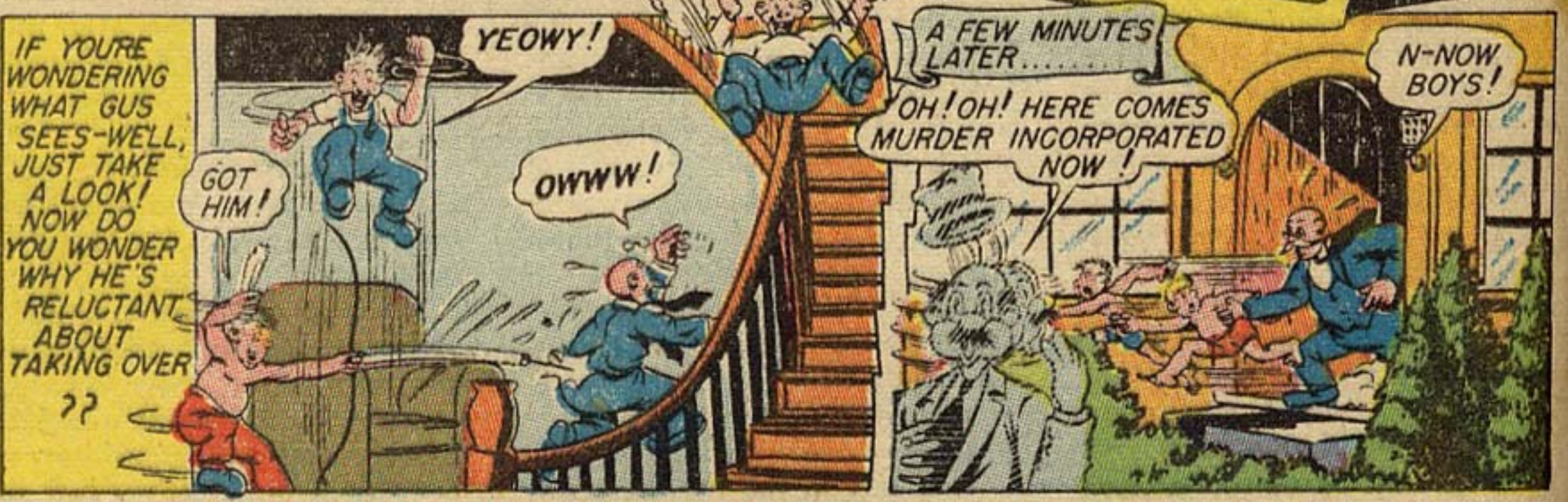
And as the heroic McGook left headquarters with the eyes of the force upon him, a strange new sensation of peace possessed him. His corns had given up hurting him. In disgust, no doubt,

# GLOOMY GUS



"RED" HOLMDALE

N-NO, NOT THAT BODY - I DON'T WANT IT!



IF YOU'RE WONDERING WHAT GUS SEES - WELL, JUST TAKE A LOOK! NOW DO YOU WONDER WHY HE'S RELUCTANT ABOUT TAKING OVER ??

A FEW MINUTES LATER... OH! OH! HERE COMES MURDER INCORPORATED NOW!

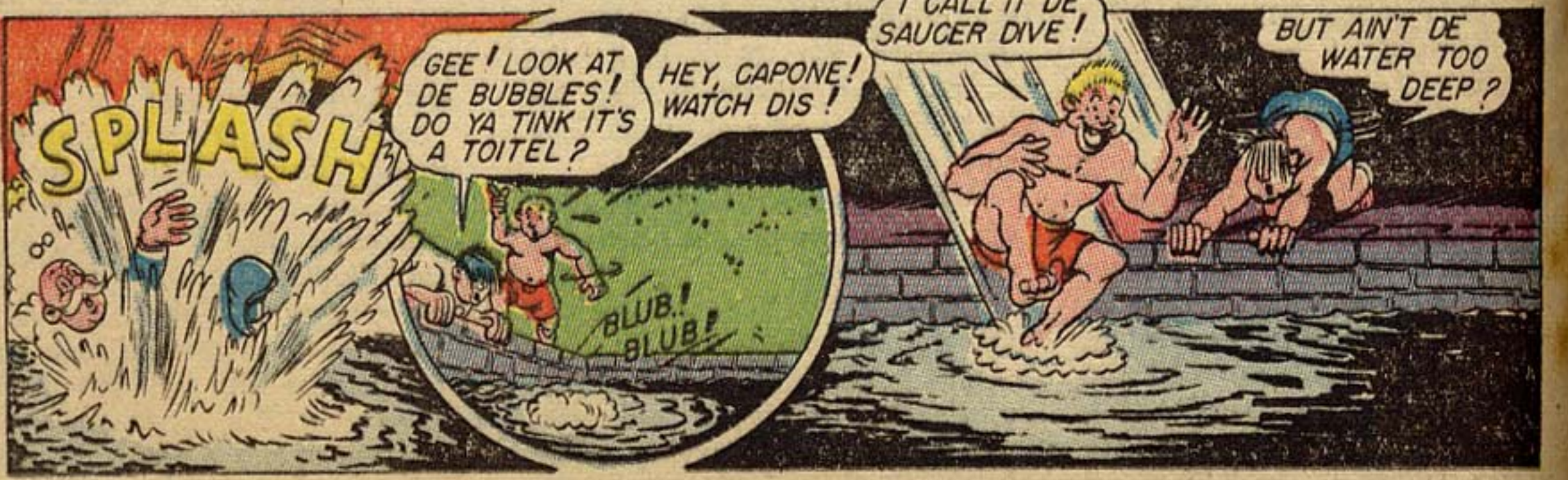
N-NOW BOYS!



... DON'T OVER DO IT, FELLOWS REMEMBER MY BLOOD PRESSURE!

HOW'S THIS?

HEY!



GEE! LOOK AT DE BUBBLES! DO YA TINK IT'S A TOITEL?

HEY, CAPONE! WATCH DIS!

I CALL IT DE SAUCER DIVE!

BUT AIN'T DE WATER TOO DEEP?

BLUB! BLUB!

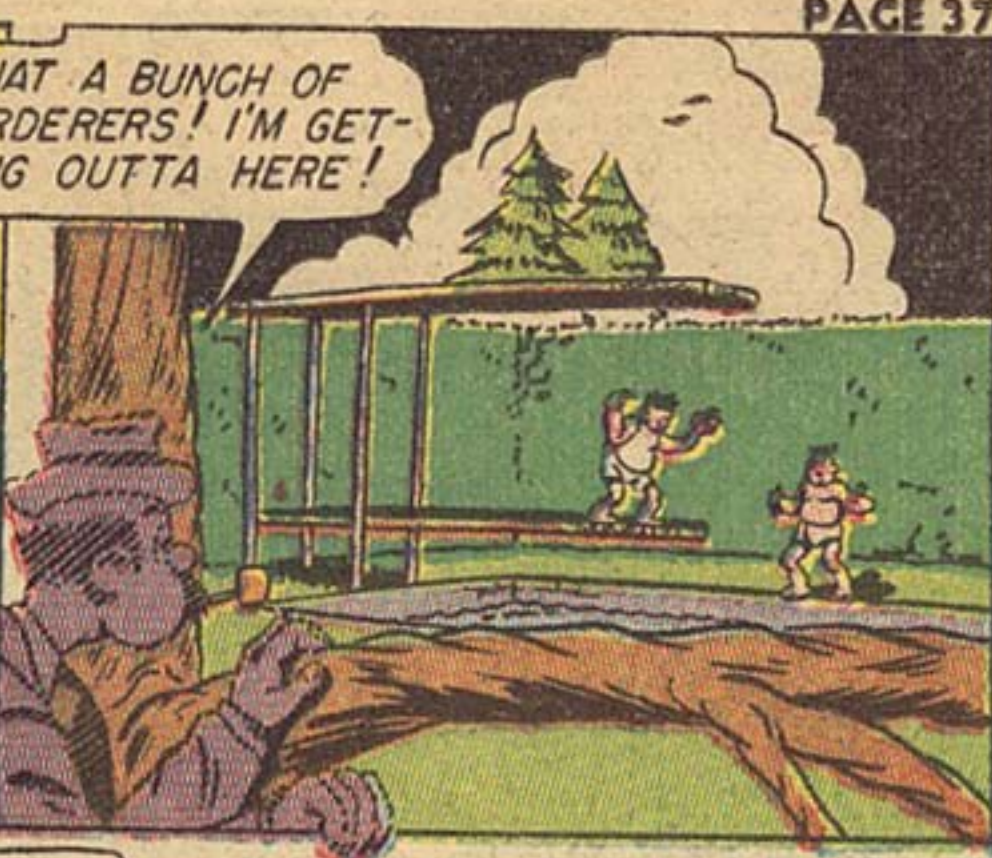


NAW! SEE, I KIN STAND!

WELL! I'LL BE DOGGONED!



WHAT A BUNCH OF MURDERERS! I'M GETTING OUTTA HERE!



BUT AS GUS IS ABOUT TO SNEAK AWAY.....

JUST A MINUTE - WHERE DO YOU THINK YOU'RE GOING?

I-I ER... I JUST THOUGHT I'D TAKE A LITTLE WALK! S-SAY, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE POOL!

LISTEN- ST. PETE TOLD ME OF YOUR COMING TO TAKE MY PLACE IN THAT BODY-

B-BUT YOU'VE GOTTA DIE FIRST!

WHAT DO YOU THINK I AM, A LIVING GHOST? I AM DEAD!



QUIT STALLING - AND GET INTO MY BODY!

B-B-BUT...



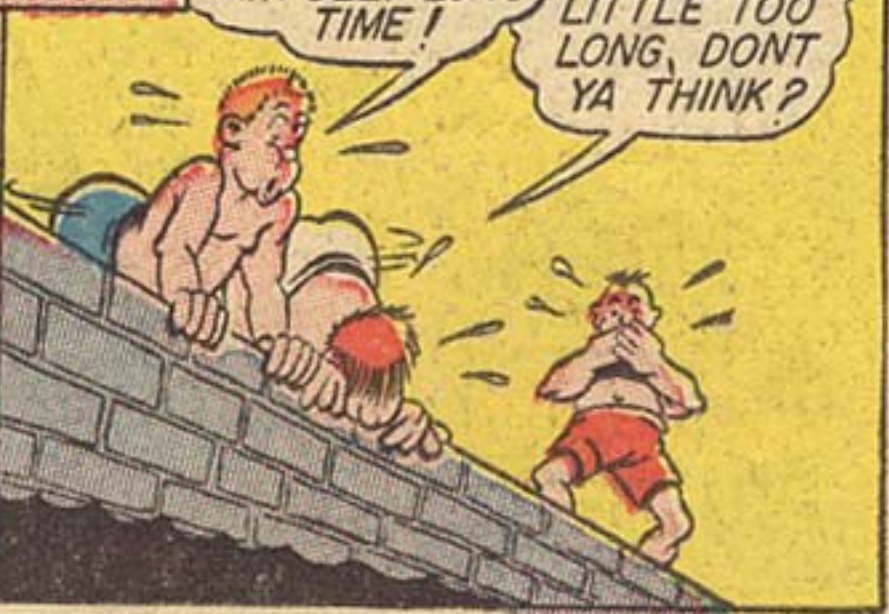
THERE'LL BE NO BUTS ABOUT IT! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

Y-YES, SIR!

MEANWHILE UP ABOVE AT THE EDGE OF THE POOL.

GEE! POP'S BEEN DOWN THERE AN AWFULLY LONG TIME!

YEAH! MAYBE WE HELD HIM UNDER A LITTLE TOO LONG, DONT YA THINK?



BUT AT THIS MOMENT A HAND EMERGES FROM THE WATER !!



LOOK! THERE HE IS, BOY, HE SURE HELD HIS BREATH A LONG TIME!

YEAH - LET'S HAVE HIM DO IT AGAIN!

BUT AT THIS MOMENT.....

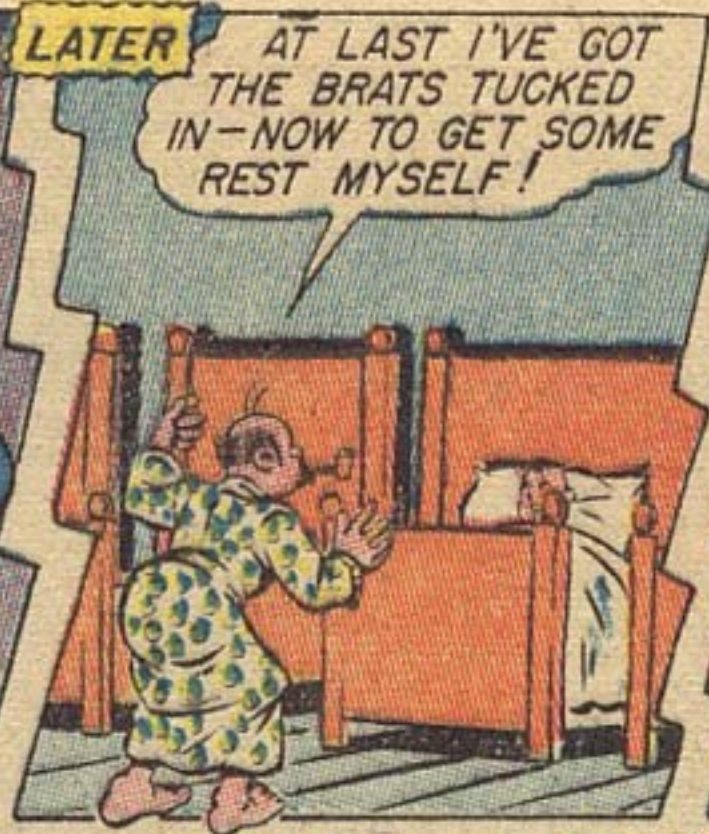
HORACE - C'MON, INTO THE HOUSE WITH THE CHILDREN! THEY'VE GOTTA GO TO BED NOW!





YOU KNOW YOU'RE TAKING 'EM ON A PICNIC TOMORROW—SO WHY DO YOU INSIST ON TIRING 'EM OUT?

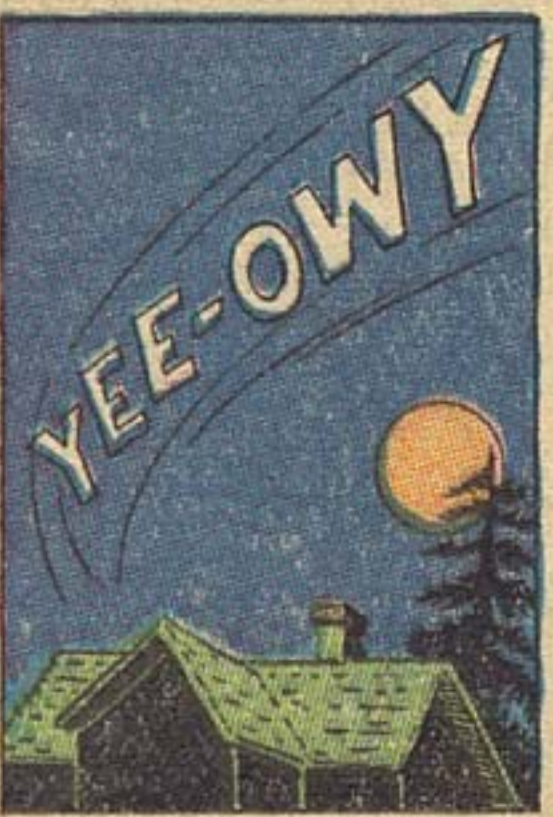
WOE IS ME!



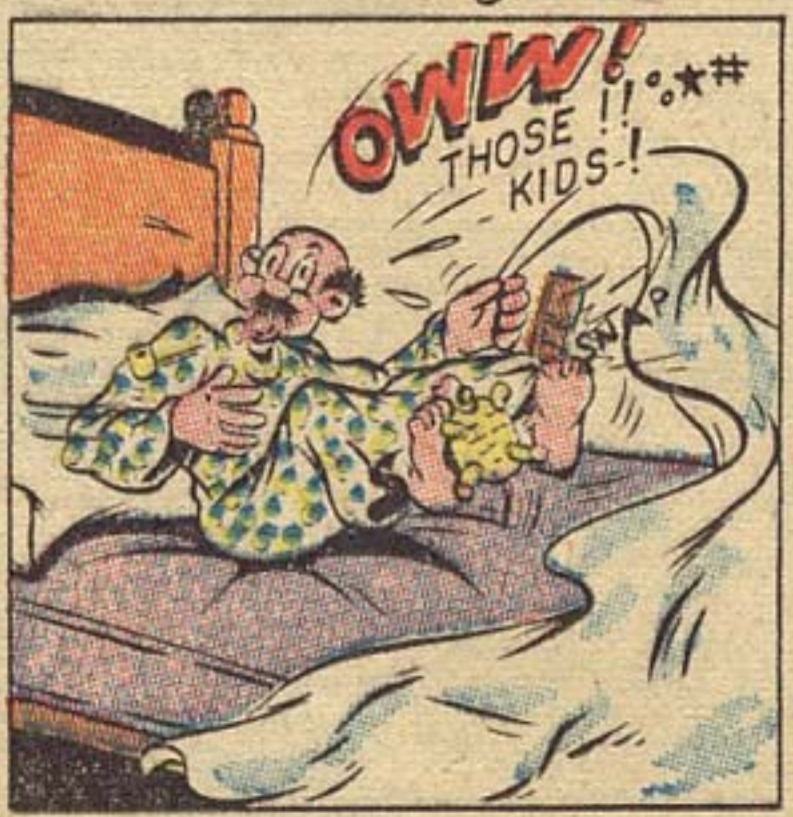
LATER AT LAST I'VE GOT THE BRATS TUCKED IN—NOW TO GET SOME REST MYSELF!



BOY! AM I TIRED! WHAT DID I DO TO DESERVE THIS?



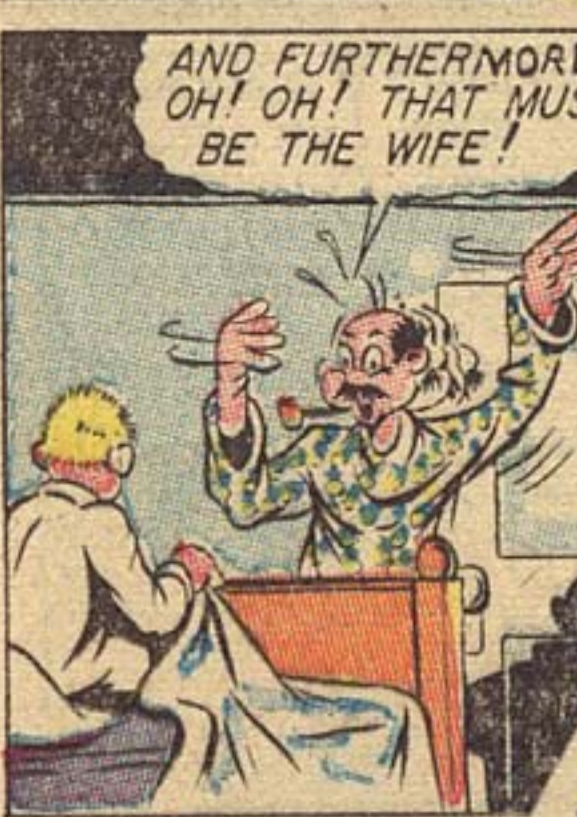
YEE-O-WY



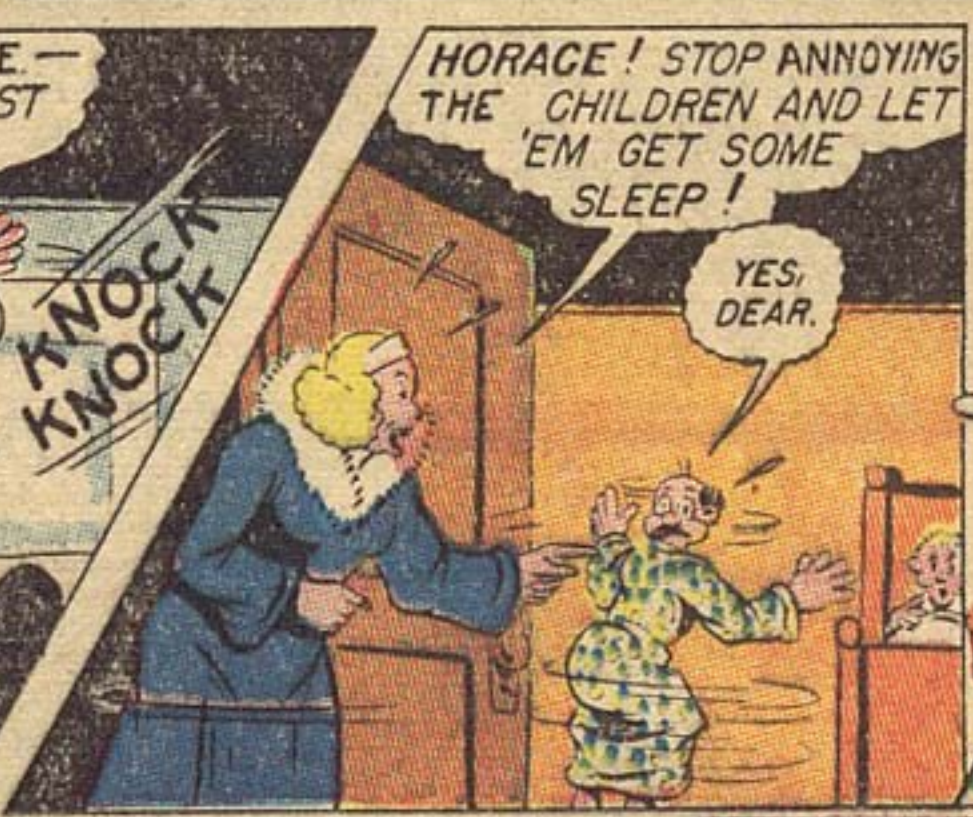
OWW! THOSE KIDS!



YOU OUGHT A BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELVES!  
ME? ME? ME?



AND FURTHERMORE—OH! OH! THAT MUST BE THE WIFE!  
KNOCK KNOCK



HORACE! STOP ANNOYING THE CHILDREN AND LET 'EM GET SOME SLEEP!  
YES, DEAR.



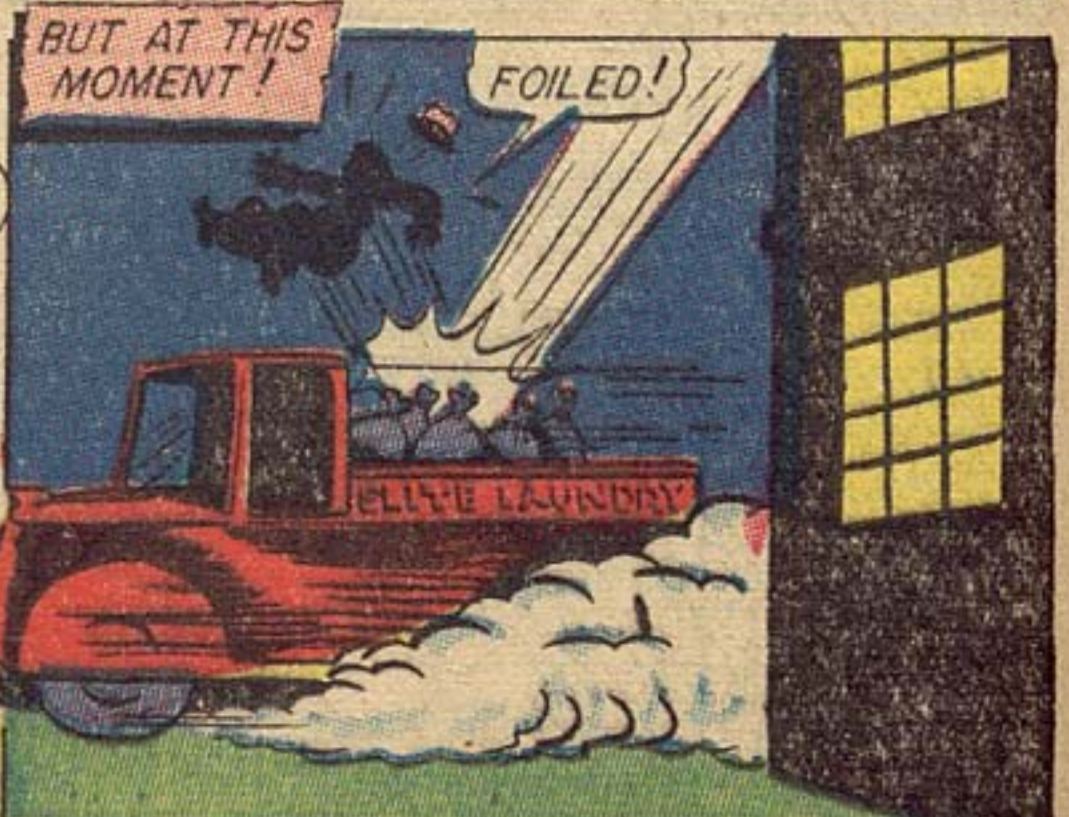
I'VE HAD ENOUGH! I CAN'T STAND ANY MORE!



I'LL JUMP OUT THE WINDOW AND END IT ALL!



BOY! THAT GROUND IS GO IN' TO FEEL GOOD!



BUT AT THIS MOMENT!  
FOILED!

UTTERLY DISGUSTED AT HAVING HIS LIFE SAVED BY THE LAUNDRY BAGS ON THE TRUCK—GUS DECIDES ON ANOTHER COURSE.....



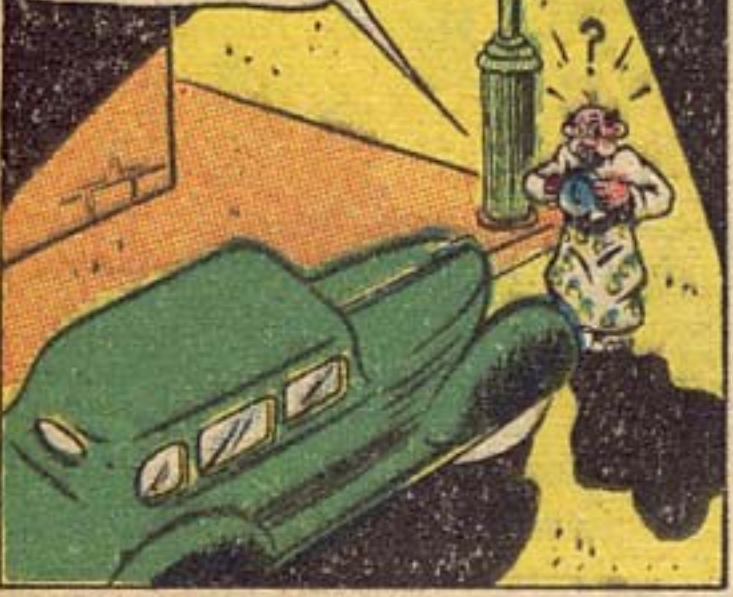
THIS CAR IS COMING PRETTY FAST—HE OUGHTA BE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF ME.



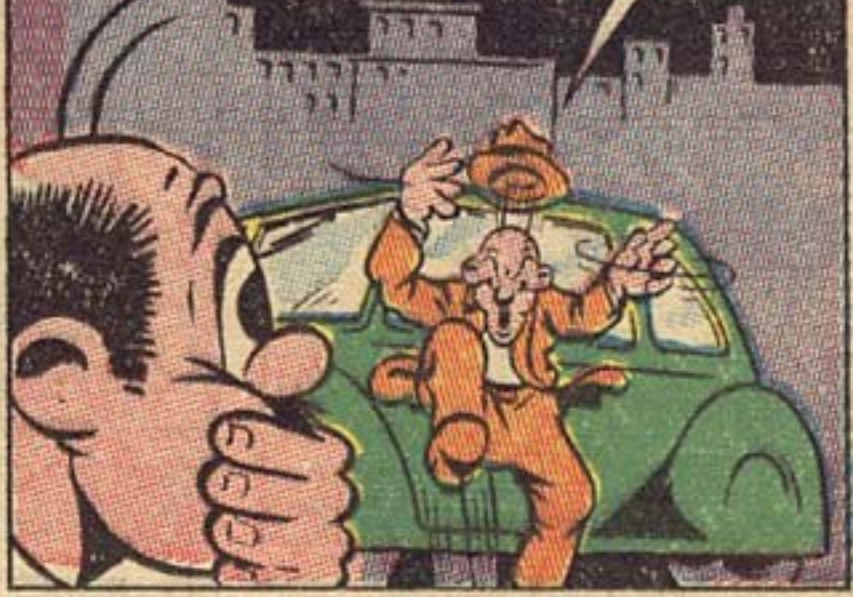
.... I'LL HEAR THE CRASH ANY MINUTE NOW!



HMM—HE STOPPED—FUNNY I DIDN'T HEAR HIM APPLY HIS BRAKES!



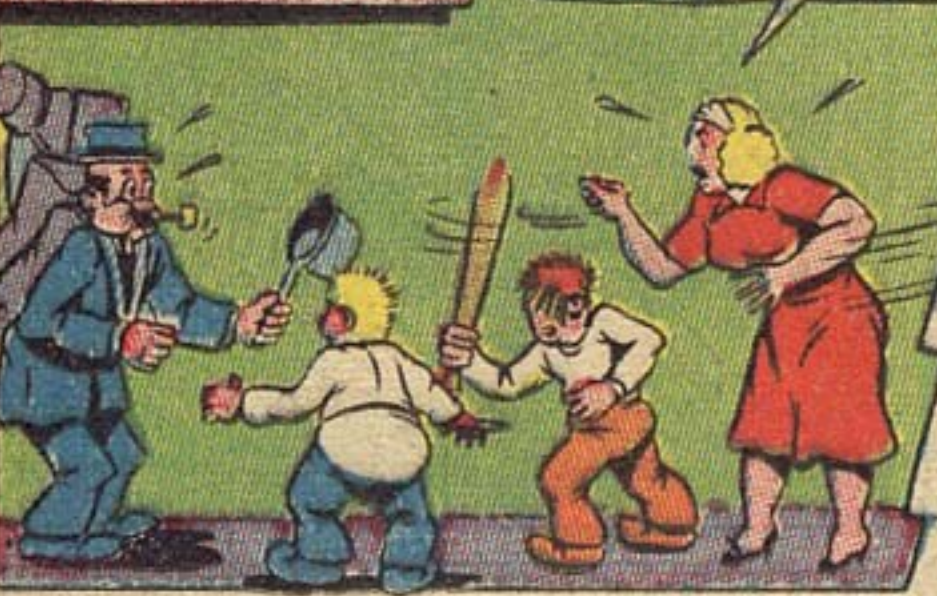
##\*!! I'VE RUN OUT OF GAS—THIS BLANKETY-BLANK GAS RATIONING!



AND SO, BEING THWARTED IN HIS ATTEMPTS TO TAKE HIS LIFE, GUS RESOLVES TO GO BACK AND FACE THE WORST!



THE NEXT MORNING THEY ARE SET FOR THE HIKE... (THAT IS, EVERYONE BUT GUS)



TAKE JUNIOR'S BAT, HORACE! DON'T MAKE THE BOYS CARRY EVERYTHING!



PUFF! PUFF!

THEY DECIDE TO CAMP—BUT BEFORE EATING THE KIDS GET GUS TO TEACH 'EM HOW TO PLAY FOOTBALL!



I KNOW THIS IS AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGMENT! OH, WELL, HERE GOES!

HERE I COME, FELLOWS—DON'T BE AFRAID TO TACKLE ME HARD NOW! IF YOU CAN—



DON'T WORRY!

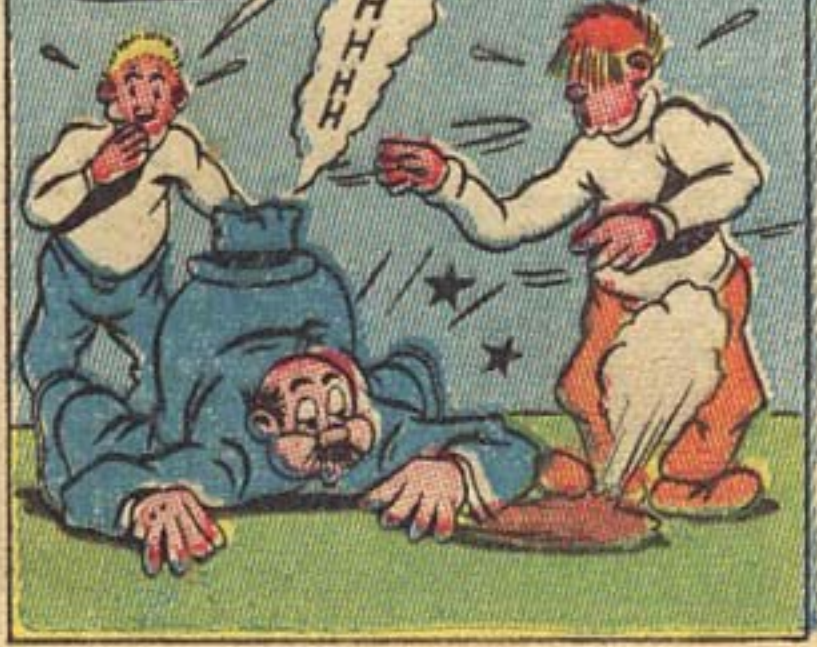
WE WON'T BE AFRAID!



I GOT HIM!

ME TOO!

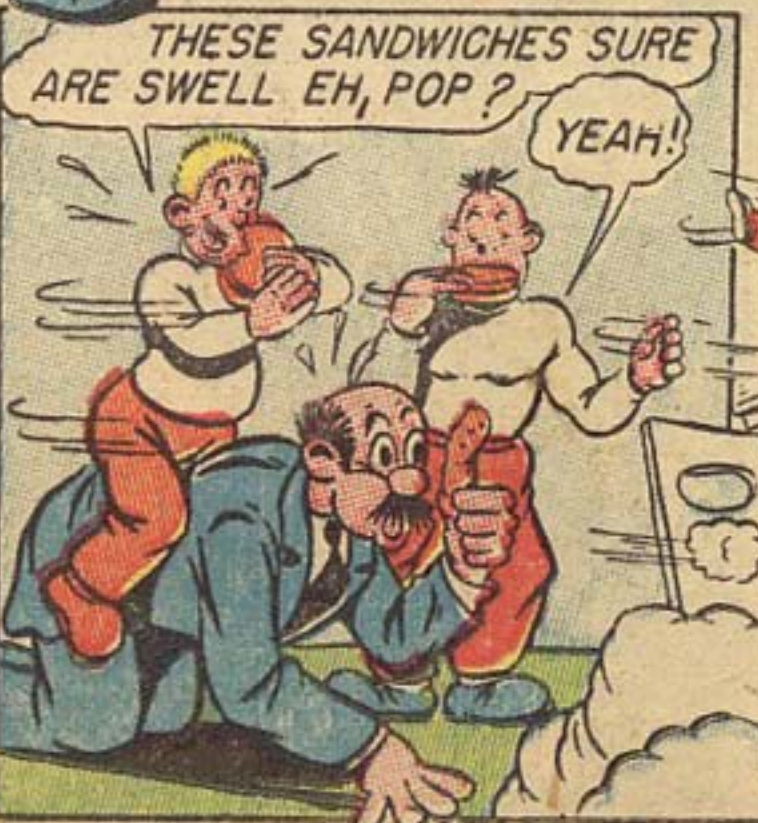
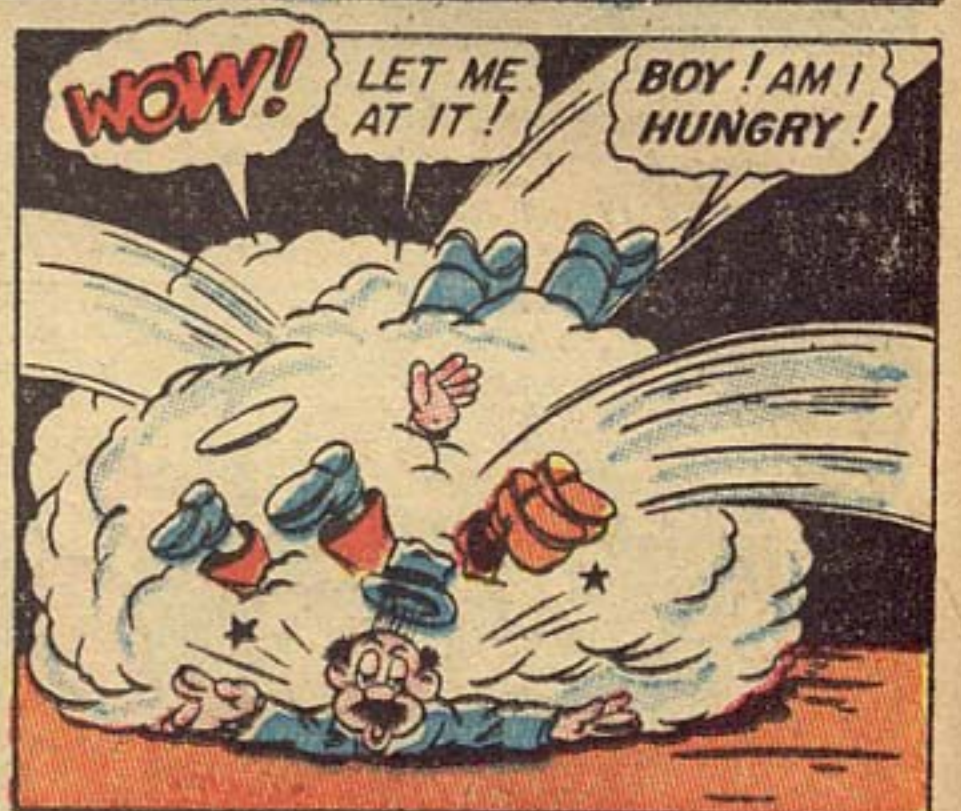
WAS THAT TACKLE ALL RIGHT?



O YEAH! HOW'RE WE DOIN'?

O H H H H





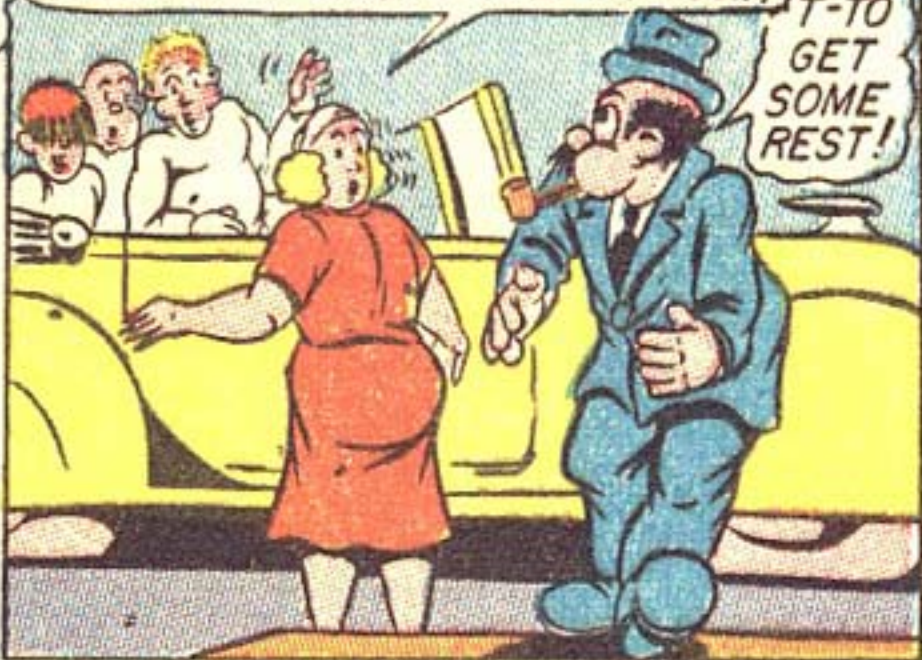
DO YOU REALIZE THAT THE PEOPLE FROM THE ORPHANAGE ARE WAITING FOR 'EM?



WHY, YES—I KNOW YOU'VE GROWN ATTACHED TO THE DEARS—BUT THE AGREEMENT WAS WHEN THE OLD ORPHANAGE BURNT DOWN, THAT WE'D KEEP THE CHILDREN ONLY 'TILL THEY COULD ERECT A NEW ONE.

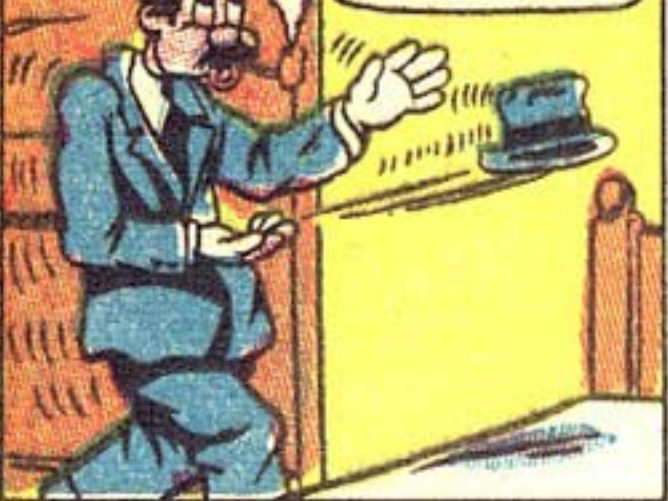


AND SO NOW THE TIME HAS COME WHEN WE'LL HAVE TO SAY GOOD BYE TO THE ANGELS—W-WHERE ARE YOU GOIN'?

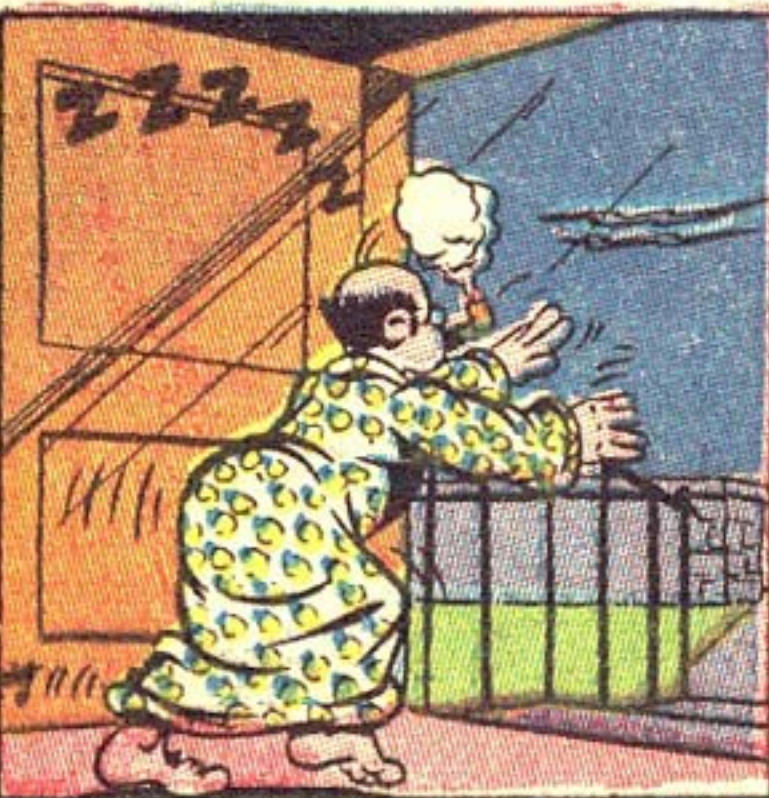


T-TO GET SOME REST!

HMMM—WITH THOSE KIDS OUT OF THE WAY—THIS SET-UP WON'T BE SO BAD AFTER ALL! BUT FIRST I'M GOING TO GET SOME REST!



HEY, READERS, HERE'S SOMETHING WE HADN'T FIGURED ON—GUS HAS GOTTEN INTO THE BODY OF A SLEEPWALKER!



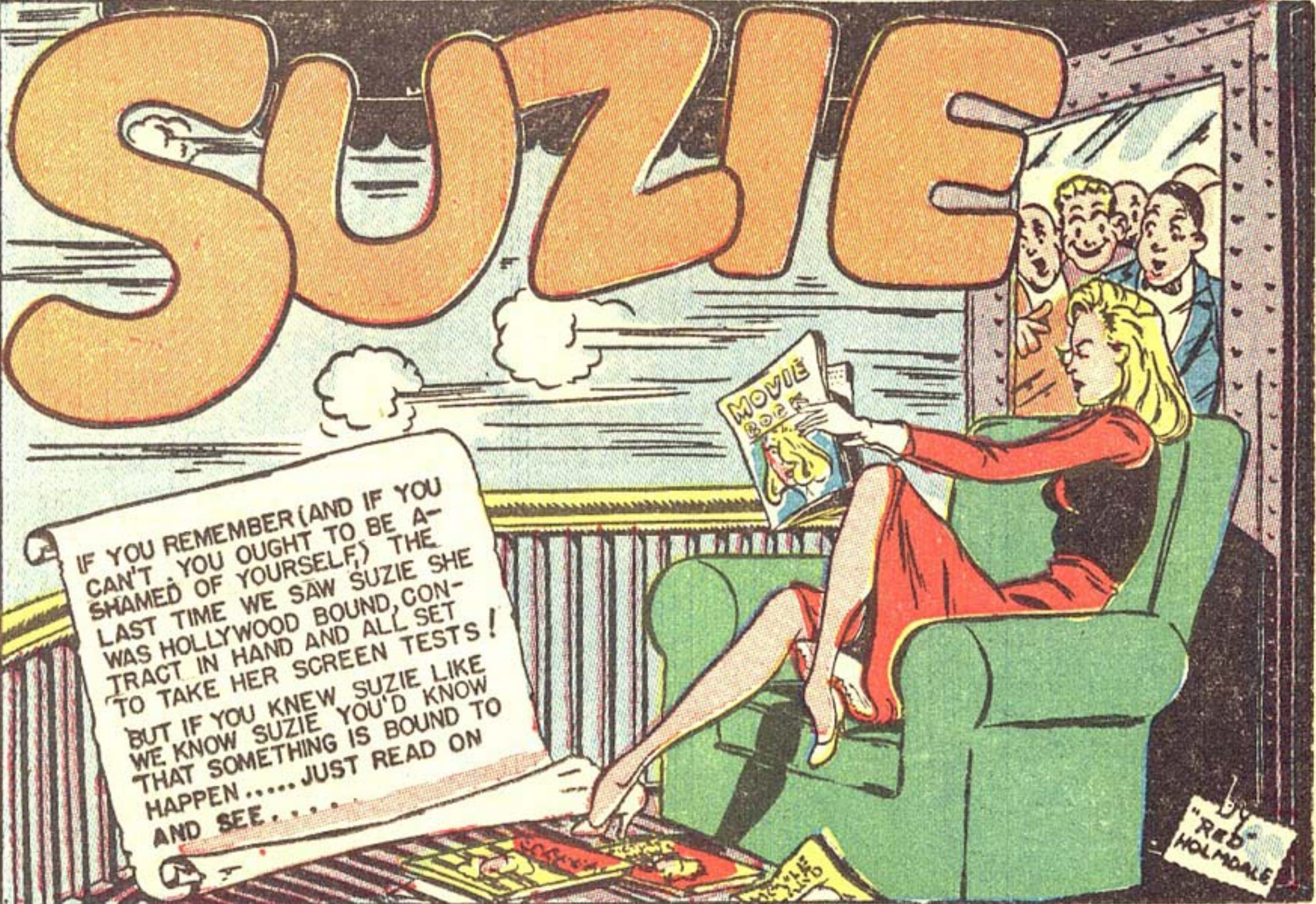
FOR VICTORY BUY UNITED STATES WAR BONDS AND STAMPS



SHUCKS! I WOULD GET INTO A BODY THAT COULDN'T SWIM!

MORE HILARIOUS ADVENTURES WITH GLOOMY GUS, IN JANUARY'S TOP-NOTCH LAUGH COMICS! YOU'LL LAUGH YOUR HEAD OFF!

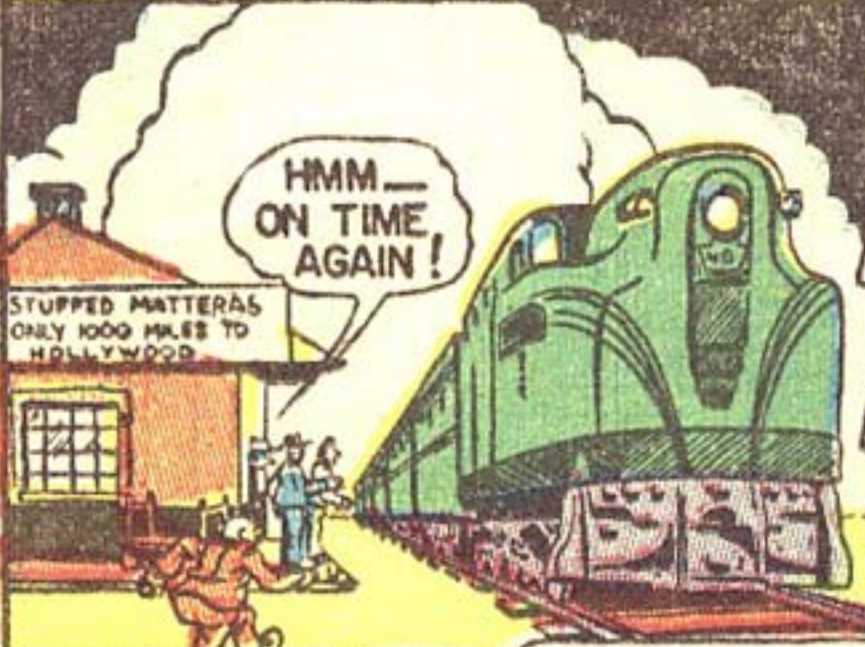
# SUZIE



IF YOU REMEMBER (AND IF YOU CAN'T YOU OUGHT TO BE A-SHAMED OF YOURSELF,) THE LAST TIME WE SAW SUZIE SHE WAS HOLLYWOOD BOUND, CONTRACT IN HAND AND ALL SET TO TAKE HER SCREEN TESTS! BUT IF YOU KNEW SUZIE LIKE WE KNOW SUZIE YOU'D KNOW THAT SOMETHING IS BOUND TO HAPPEN..... JUST READ ON AND SEE.....

by "RED" HOLMORALE

SUZIE'S TRAIN PULLS INTO A WESTERN TOWN



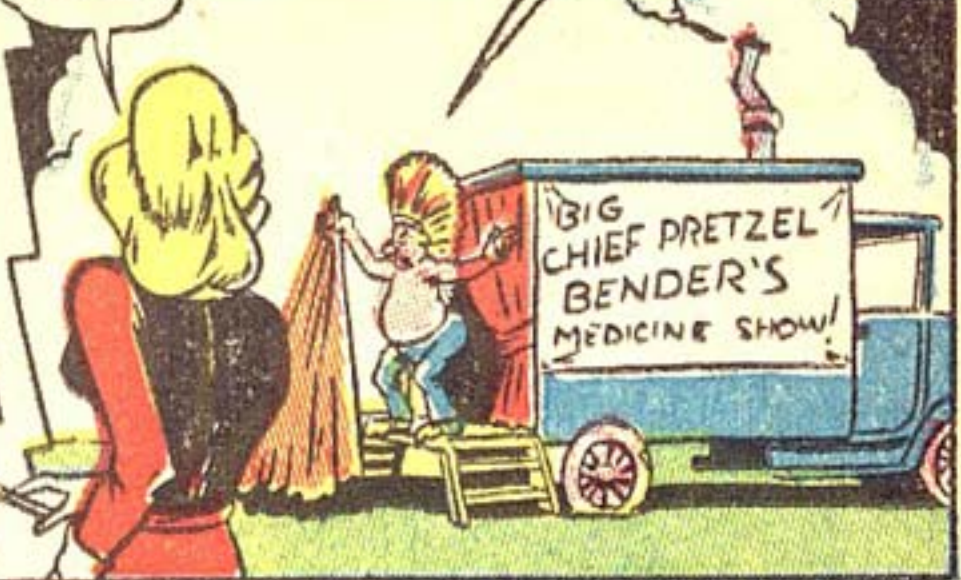
HMM— ON TIME AGAIN!

I GUESS I MAY AS WELL GET OUT AND STRETCH MY LEGS FOR A FEW MINUTES



OH! A REAL INDIAN CHIEF!

STEP UP, FRIENDS, AND GET 'EM WHILE THEY LAST—THESE GENUINE INDIAN BLANKETS.

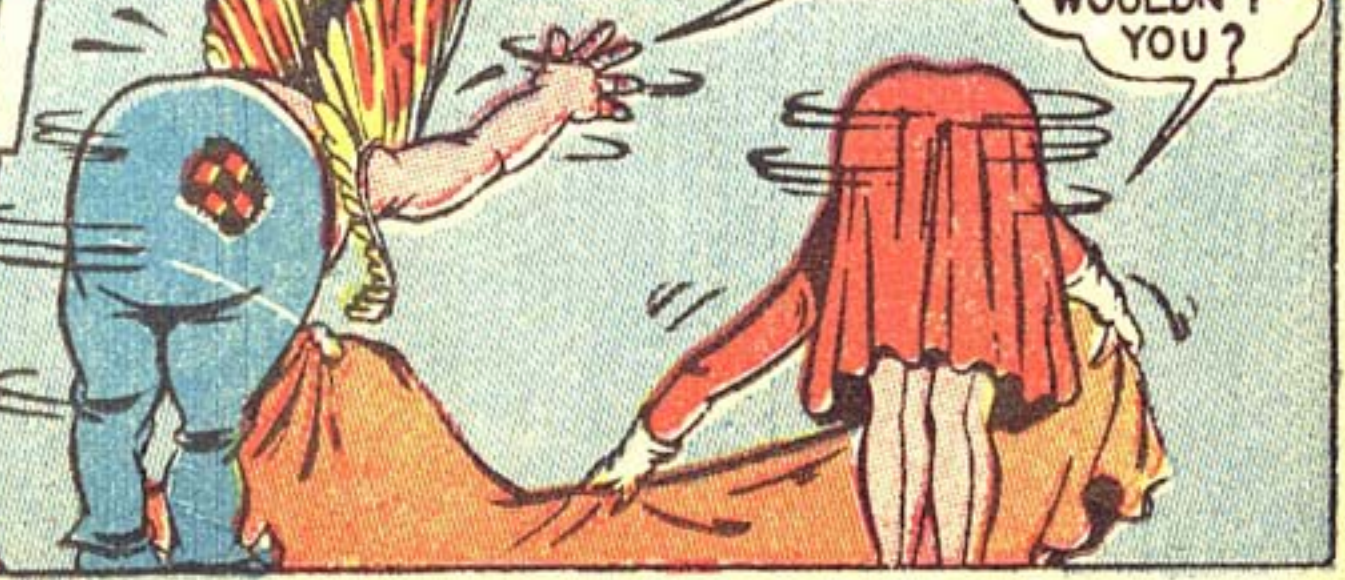


ARE THEY REALLY GENUINE INDIAN BLANKETS?



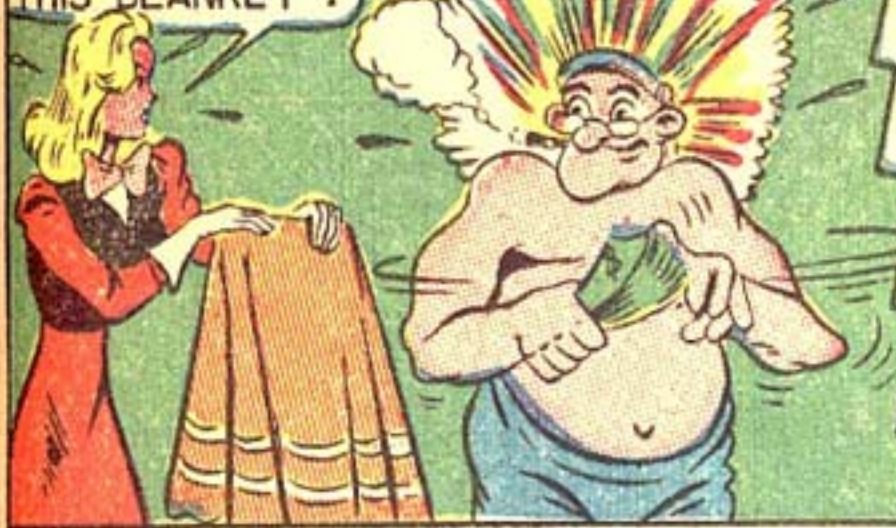
VOT—YOU MEAN TO STAND DERE AND DOUBT THE WORD OF CHIEF PRETZEL BENDER?

HERE, LET ME SHOW YA IT'S A HIPSY-PIPSY—HONEST TO GOODNESS, GENUINE, UNMISTAKABLE, REAL McCOY INDIAN BLANKET!



WELL, IF YOU SAY SO, I GUESS YOU'D KNOW, WOULDN'T YOU?

GEE, THAT'S MY LAST NICKEL OH WELL, MY TRAIN FARE'S PAID-AND WON'T MY FRIENDS BE SURPRISED WHEN THEY SEE THIS BLANKET!



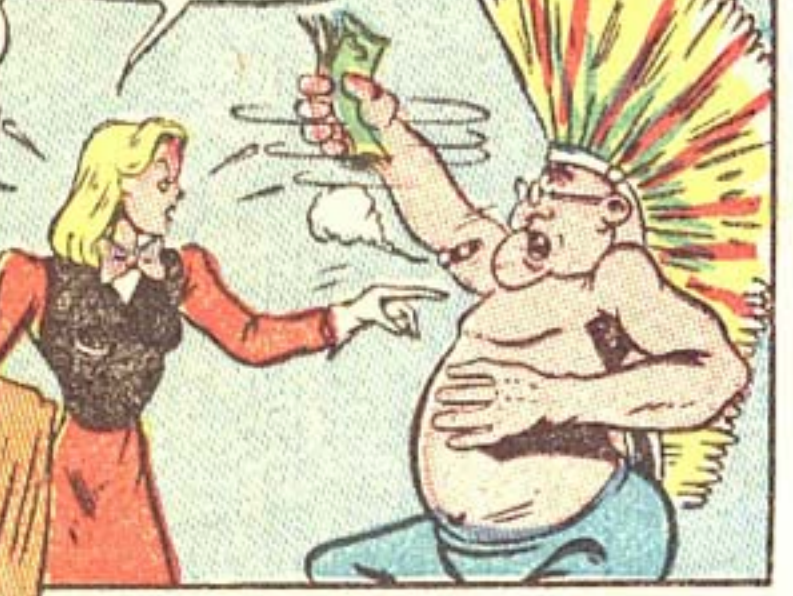
UGH-I HEAP SURE THEY WILL!

I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE THAT I-I-WHAT'S THIS! WAIT'LL I GET MY HANDS ON THAT CROOK-I'VE BEEN ROBBED!



LISTEN, YOU BIG PHONY! I WANT MY MONEY BACK!

SCRAM, SISTER!



YOU JUST WAIT HERE-TILL I GET A COP! H-HEY MY TRAIN-IT'S PULLING OUT!



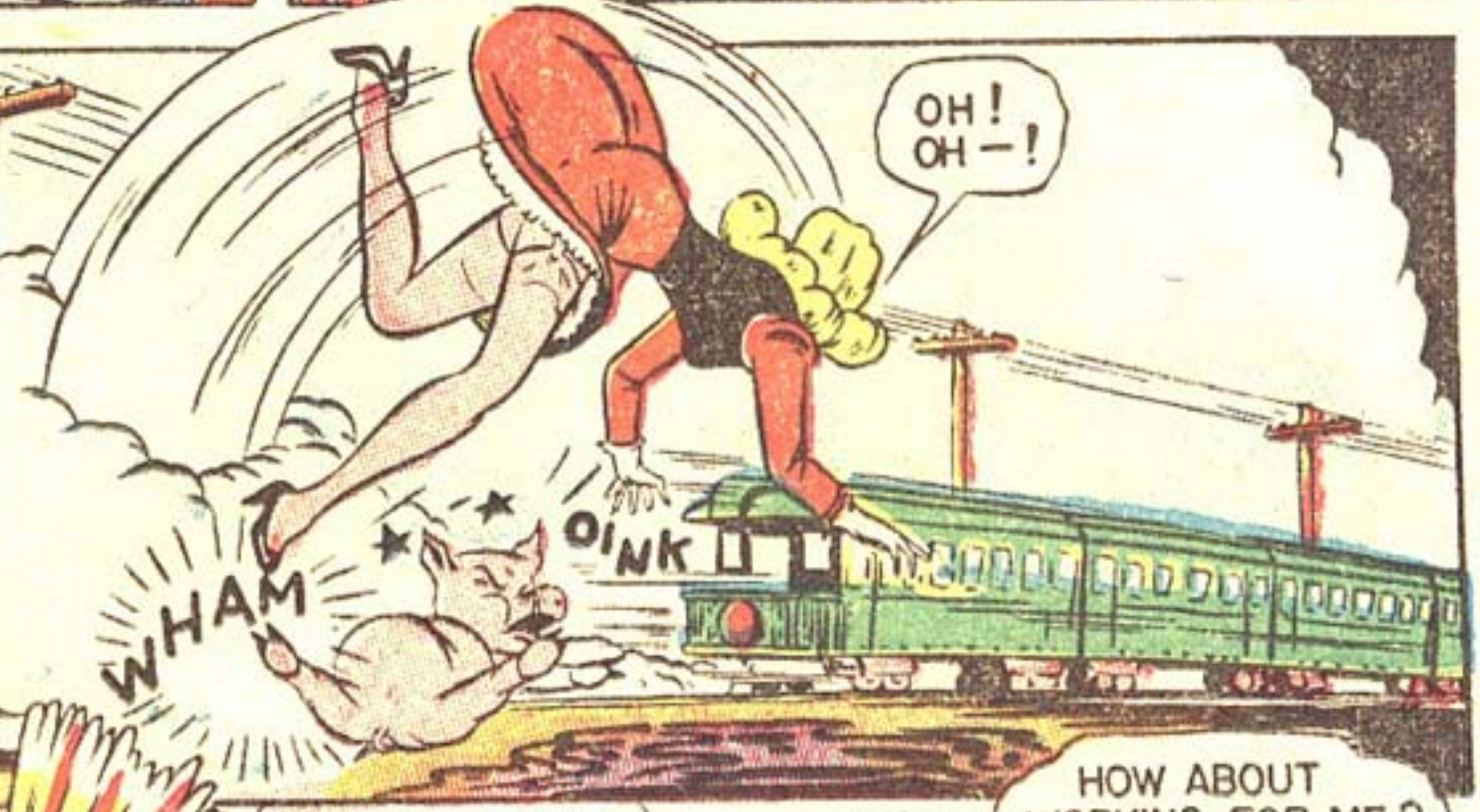
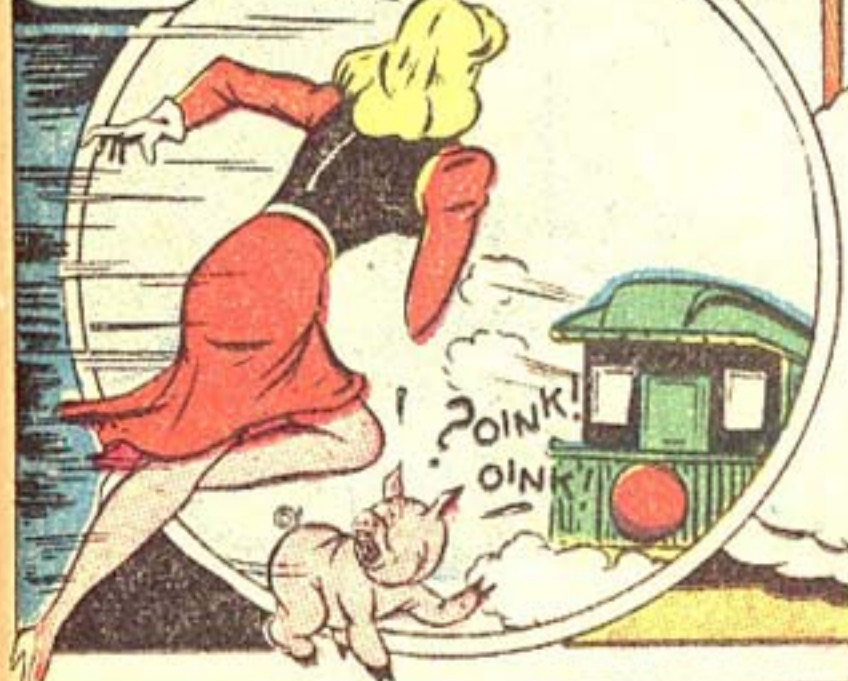
YEAH-MAYBE YOU'D BETTER HURRY AND GET ON IT!



HEY-WAIT FOR ME!



I'VE GOT TO HURRY-(PUFF)-(PUFF)!



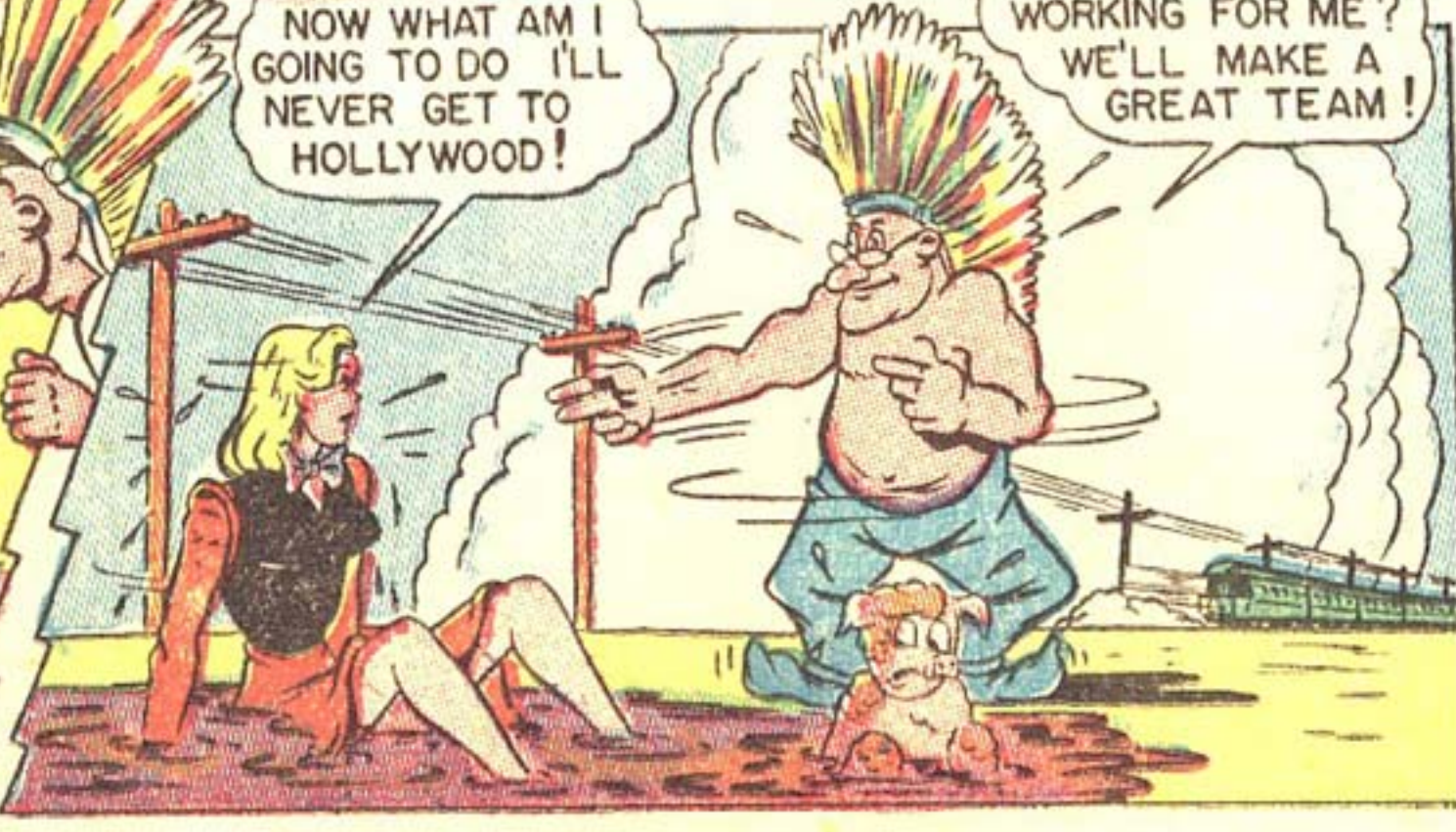
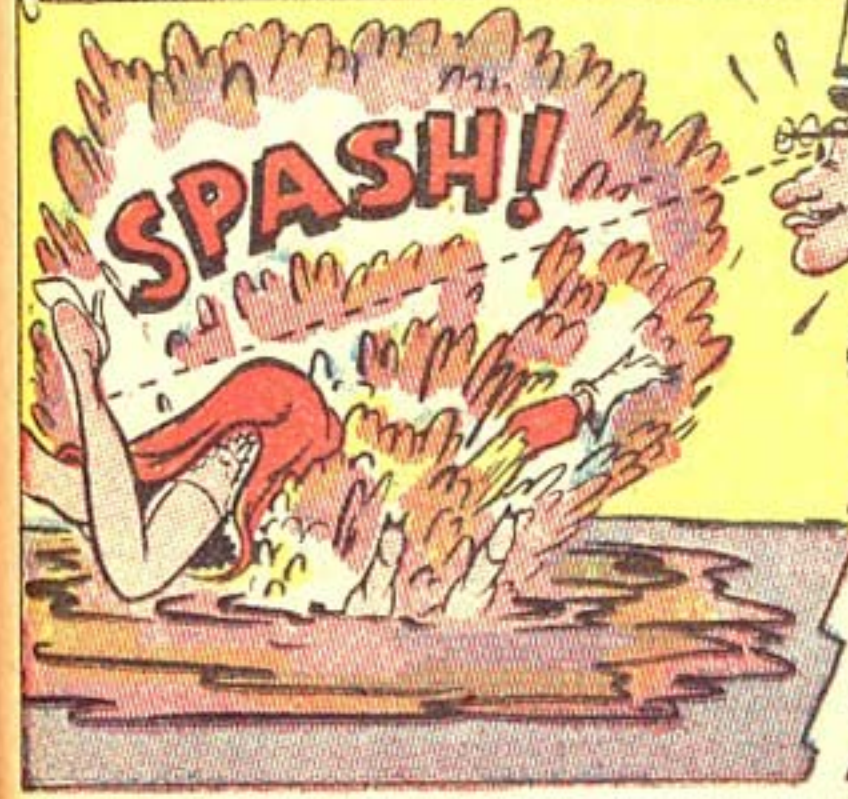
OH! OH-!

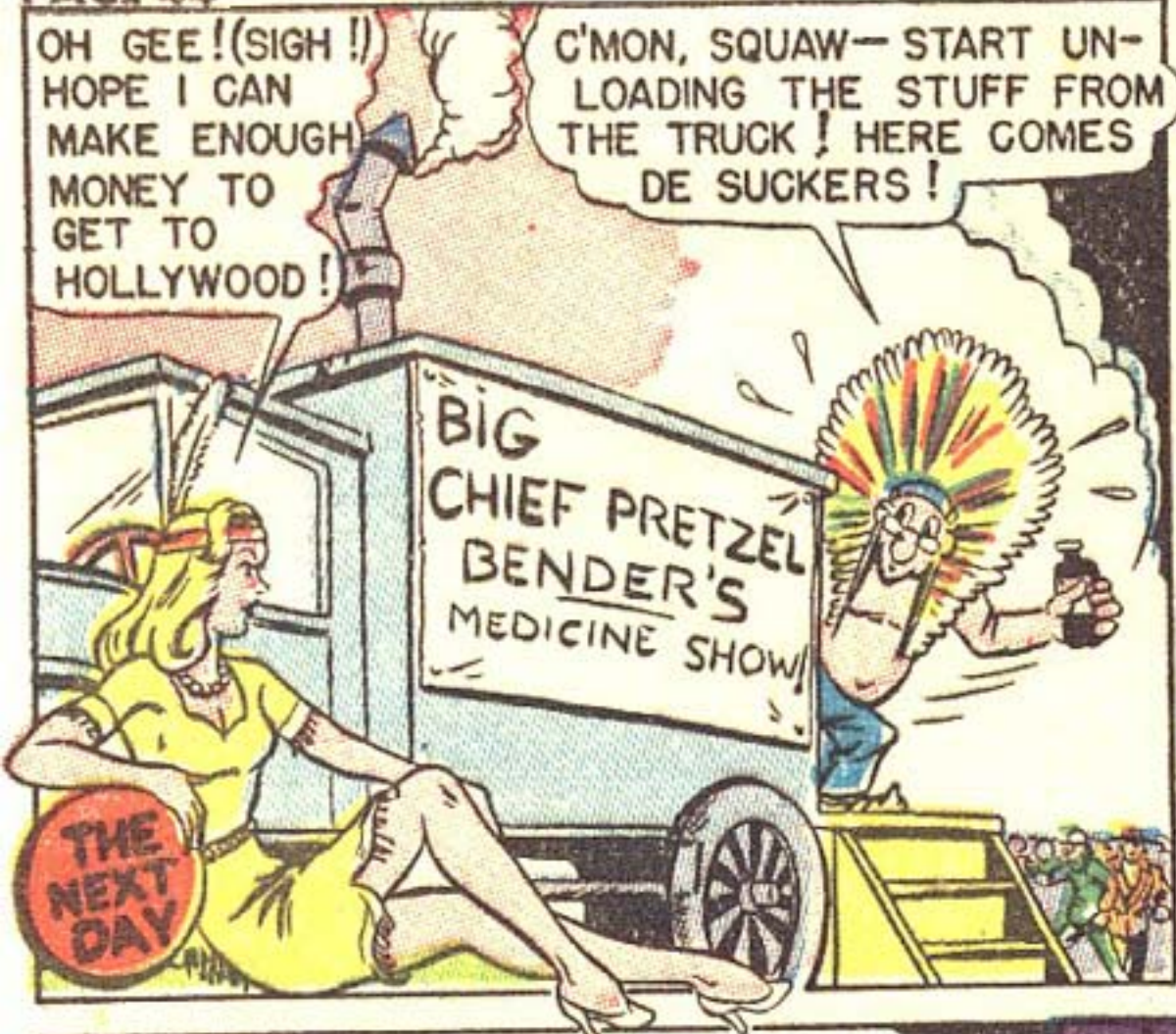
WHAM

OINK OINK

NOW WHAT AM I GOING TO DO I'LL NEVER GET TO HOLLYWOOD!

HOW ABOUT WORKING FOR ME? WE'LL MAKE A GREAT TEAM!

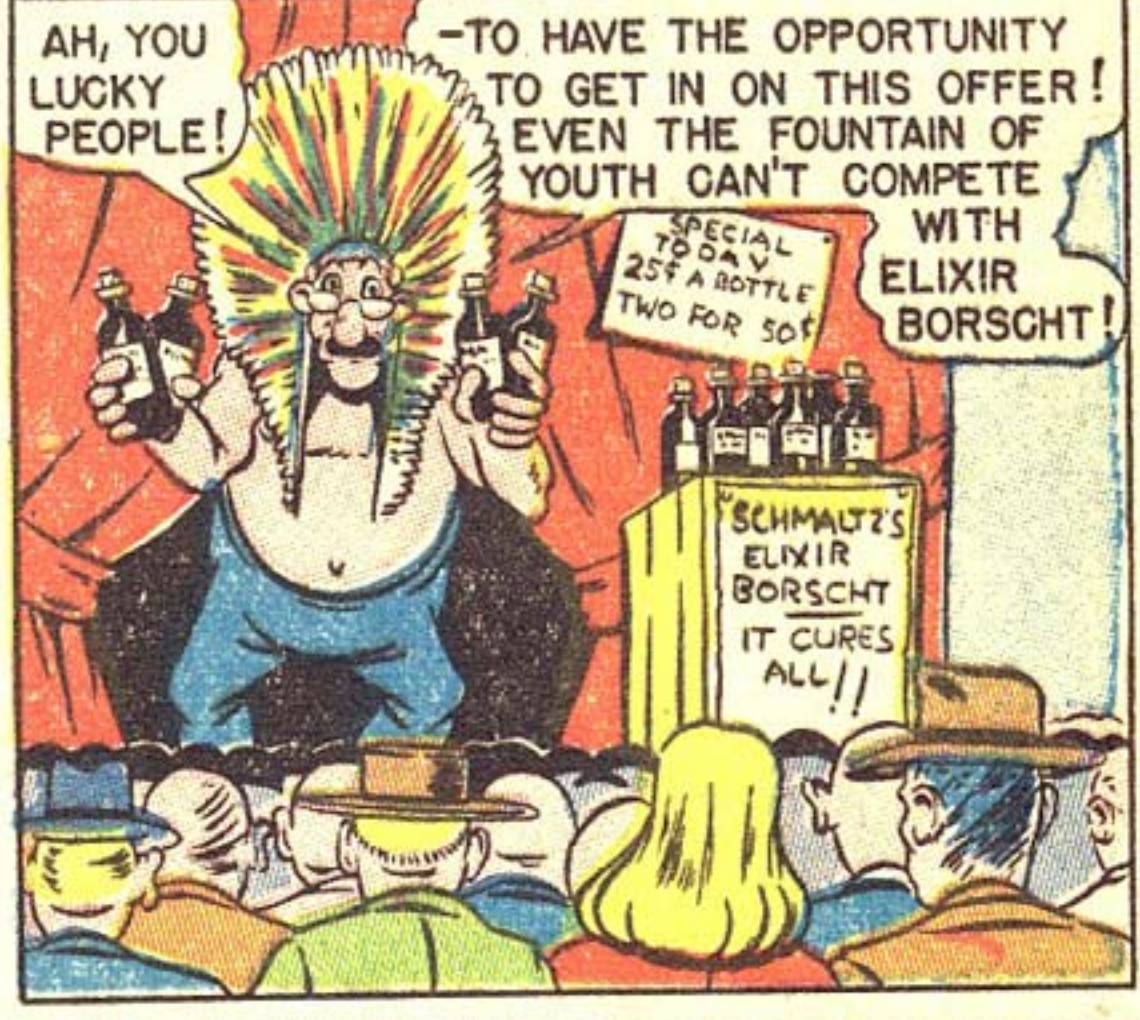




OH GEE!! (SIGH!!) HOPE I CAN MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO GET TO HOLLYWOOD!

C'MON, SQUAW— START UNLOADING THE STUFF FROM THE TRUCK! HERE COMES DE SUCKERS!

THE NEXT DAY



AH, YOU LUCKY PEOPLE!

-TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET IN ON THIS OFFER! EVEN THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH CAN'T COMPETE WITH ELIXIR BORSCHT!

SPECIAL TO DAY 25¢ A BOTTLE TWO FOR 50¢

SCHMALTZ'S ELIXIR BORSCHT IT CURES ALL!!



YES, MY FRIENDS—IF YOU'RE TROUBLED WITH GOUT—MOTHER-IN-LAWS; FALLING ARCHES—BLAH—BLAH—ELIXIR BORSCHT WILL CURE ALL—!!

MAYBE IT'LL CURE MY FALLING HAIR!

SCHMALTZ'S ELIXIR BORSCHT -DIRECTIONS-



I'LL TAKE A BOTTLE!

JUST THE THING, MY FRIEND—TWO DROPS WILL PACIFY YOUR CHILD!



HURRY AND GET SOME MORE CASES OUT HERE! THEY'RE SELLING LIKE HOT CAKES!

I'LL BE RIGHT OUT CHIEF!



BOY! WE'LL CLEAN UP ON THESE SUCKERS—JUST PUT IT RIGHT DOWN HERE!

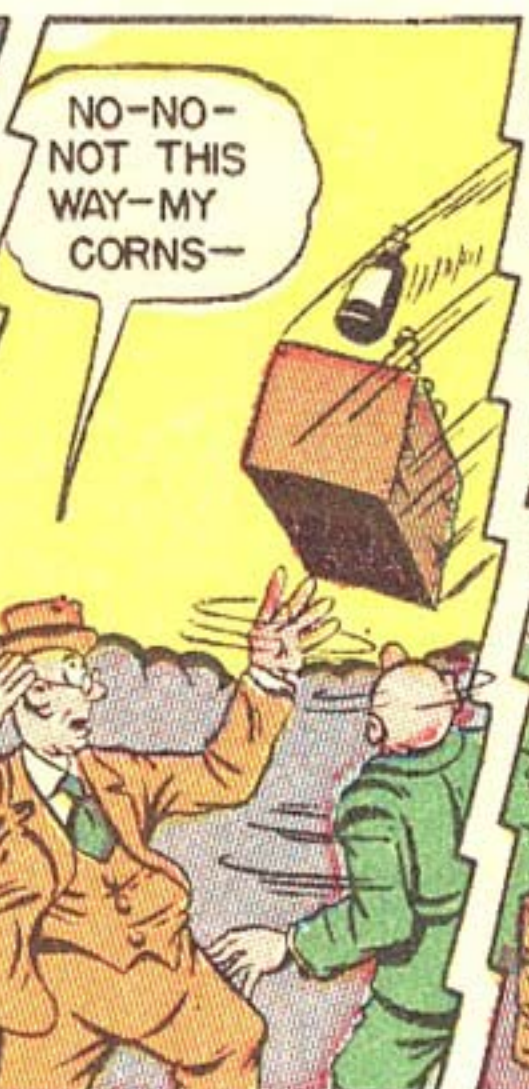


PUFF PUFF!

HEY SUZIE — LOOK OUT FOR THAT BOTTLE!



OOPS!



NO-NO-NOT THIS WAY-MY CORNS-



-WON'T STAND THIS! OWW!



OH, MY FOOT! BLANKETY-BLANK-BLANK! YOU'VE BROKE MY LITTLE FOOT!

DON'T WORRY! MR. SCHMALTZ'S EXIXIR BORSCHT IS COMING TO THE RESCUE!



TO SHOW YOU THAT THERE ARE NO HARD FEELINGS, SUCKER-- I MEAN BROTHER! TAKE THIS COMPLIMENTARY BOTTLE-- IT'S JUST THE THING FOR YOUR CORNS. THEY'LL NEVER BOTHER YOU AGAIN!

W-WELL, I'LL TRY IT!

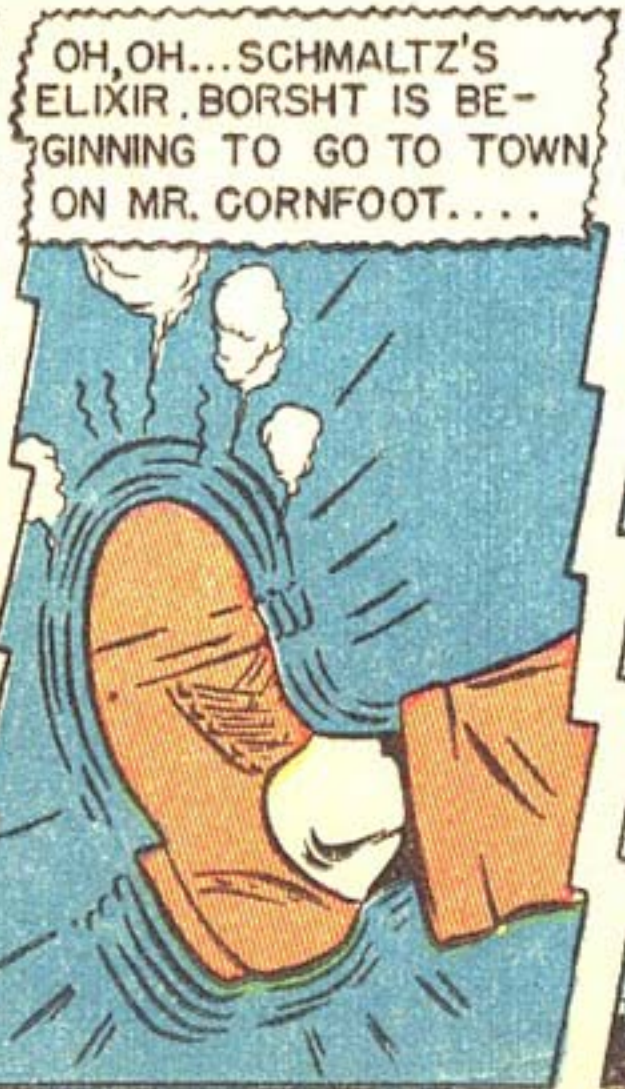


LATER THAT DAY-AT THE HOME OF MR. CORNFOOT...

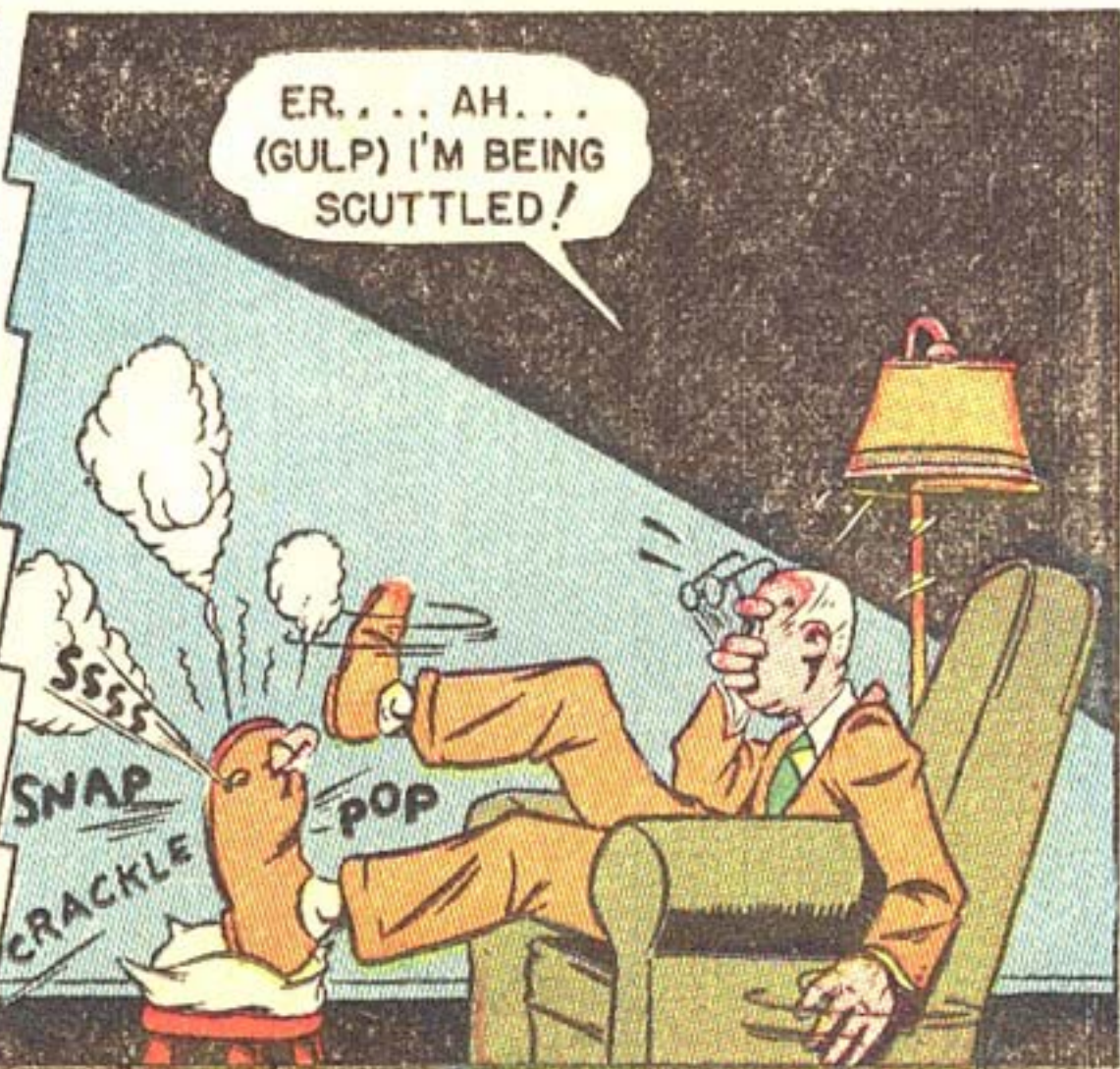
THE !G!! -- FOOT IS KILLING ME... THIS STUFF BETTER WORK. THE DIRECTIONS SAY TO APPLY EXTERNALLY!



HMM... I DON'T SUPPOSED THIS STUFF COULD MAKE ME ANY WORSE OFF... ! OH, WELL-- HERE GOES-- HOPE I GET SOME RESULTS!

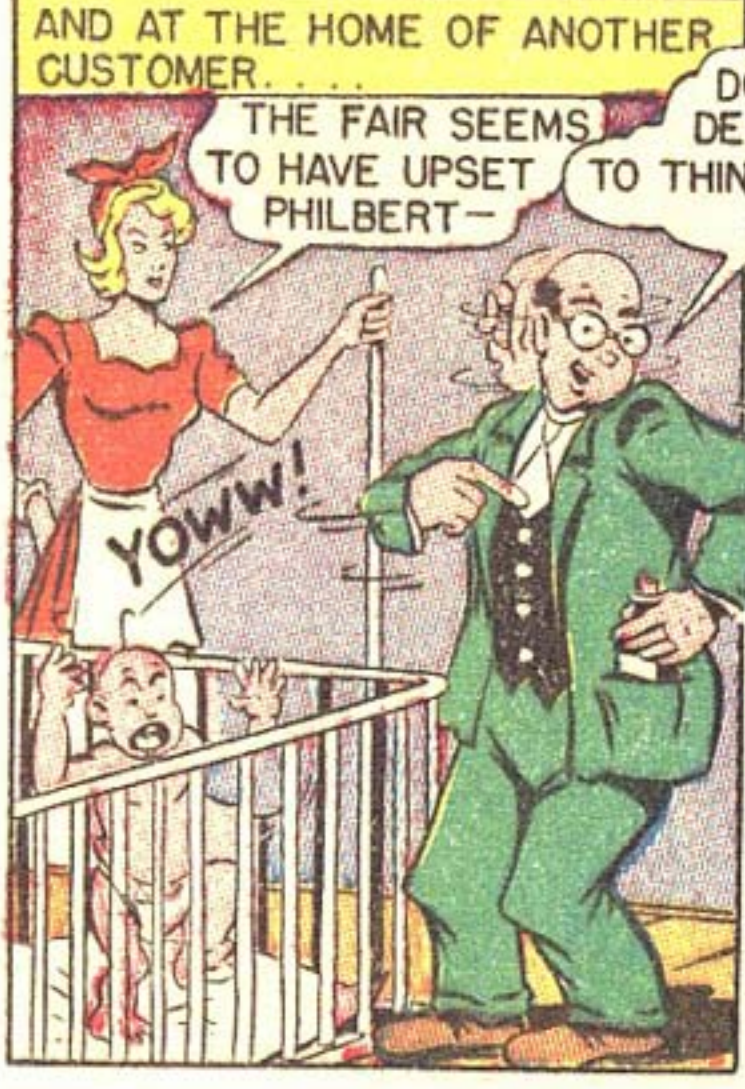


OH, OH... SCHMALTZ'S ELIXIR BORSHT IS BE-GINNING TO GO TO TOWN ON MR. CORNFOOT...



ER... AH... (GULP) I'M BEING SCUTTLED!

SSSS SNAP CRACKLE POP

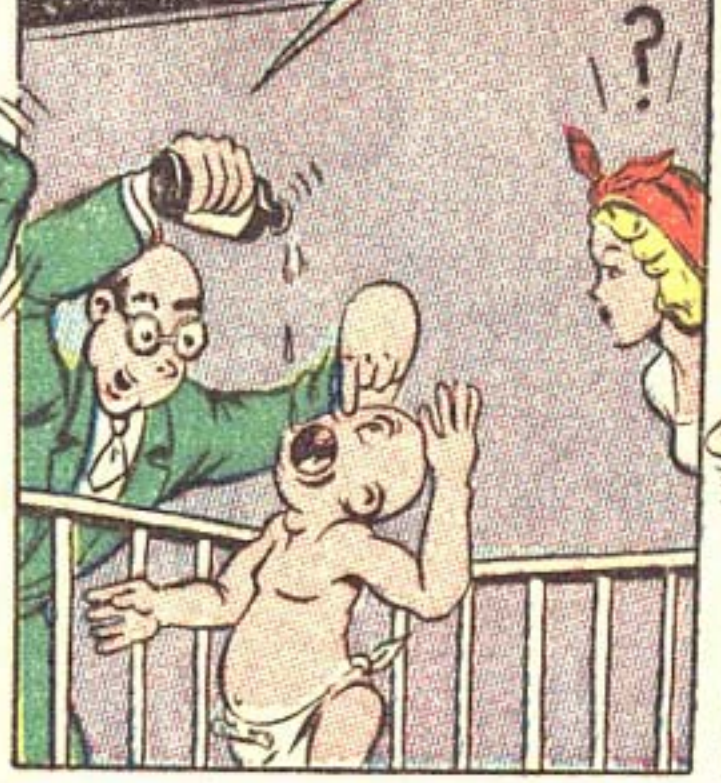


AND AT THE HOME OF ANOTHER CUSTOMER...

THE FAIR SEEMS TO HAVE UPSET PHILBERT—

DON'T WORRY DEAR, I'VE JUST TO THING TO PACIFY HIM!

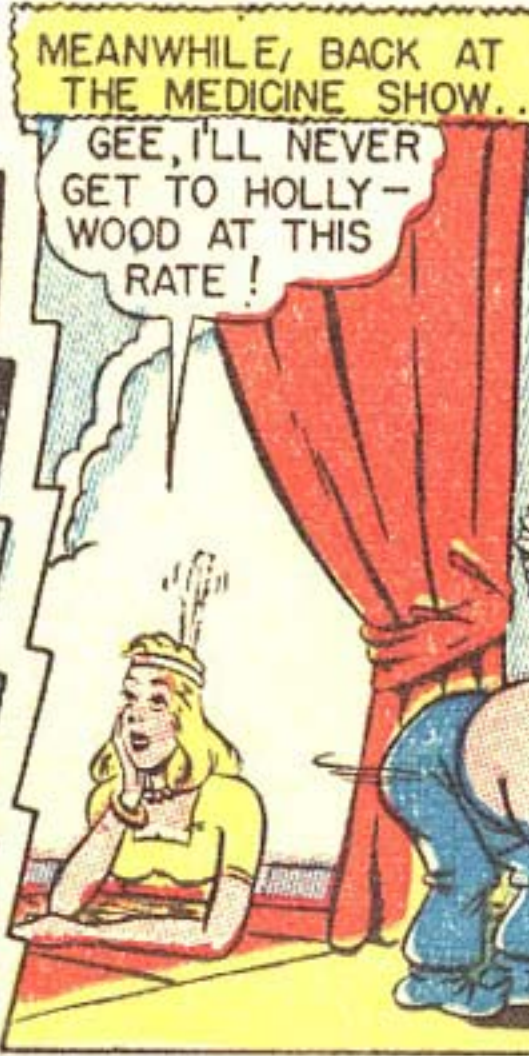
A FEW DROPS OF ELIXIR BORSCHT WILL QUIET HIM... GUARANTEED—BIG CHIEF SAID!



PHILBERT, YOU MUST CONTROL YOUR----- OW!



GOBBLE WOBBLE GOO FOO GUR-- (TRANSLATION - TODAY I AM A MAN!)



MEANWHILE, BACK AT THE MEDICINE SHOW...

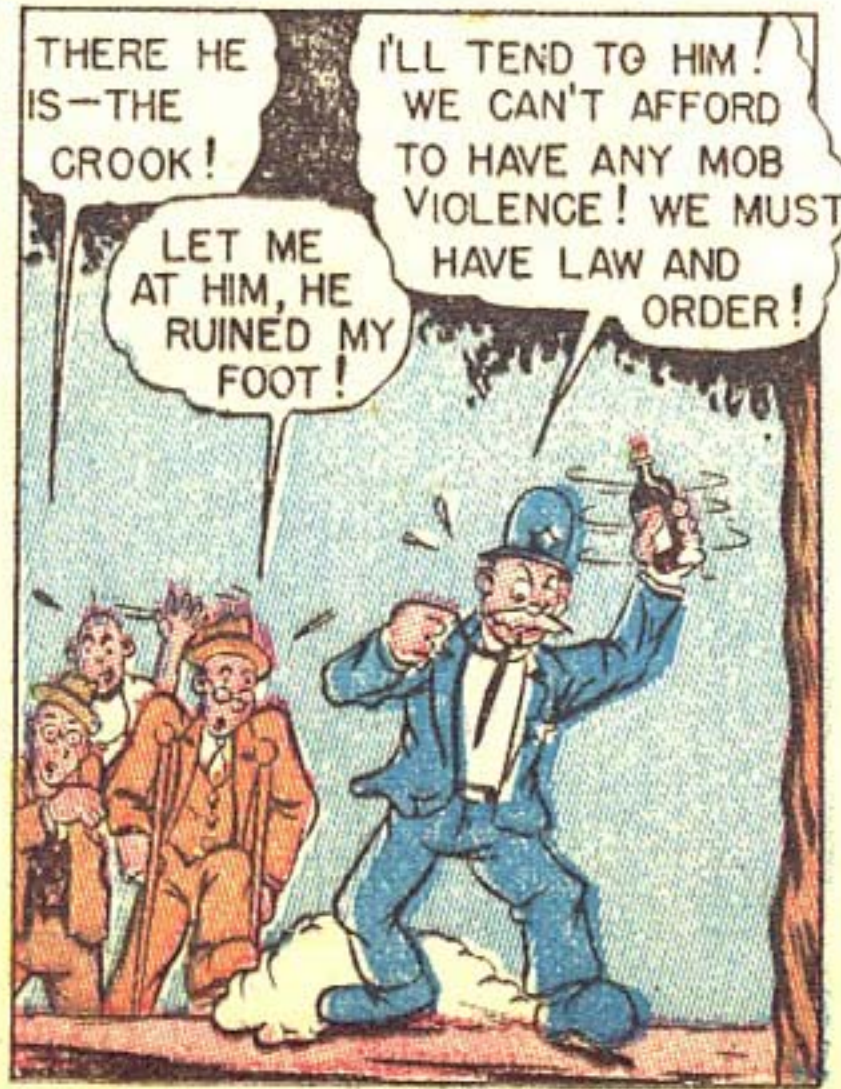
GEE, I'LL NEVER GET TO HOLLYWOOD AT THIS RATE!



BUT WE SURE CLEANED UP SUZIE... YOU'RE A GOOD LUCK, SWEET SUE FOR ME, BLAH-BLAH!



GULP! OH GOODNESS! TH-THE SH-SHERIFF'S BACK!



THERE HE IS—THE CROOK!

I'LL TEND TO HIM! WE CAN'T AFFORD TO HAVE ANY MOB VIOLENCE! WE MUST HAVE LAW AND ORDER!

LET ME AT HIM, HE RUINED MY FOOT!



HRMPH PMMPH... WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY SWINDLING THESE POOR DEFENCELESS PEOPLE WITH THIS PHONY CURE— ALL BORSCHT?

GULP! (CHOKE) DIDN'T IT STOP YOUR FALLING HAIR?



STOP IT! LISTEN YOU FAKE HIAWATHA, IF I'D GIVEN MYSELF ANOTHER TREATMENT I'D PROBABLY DISINTEGRATE! LOOK!

BALD! HMM-I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR HAIR?

HAPPENED! WHAT DO YOU THINK I'VE GOT?... MATTRESS STUFFING IN MY HAT?



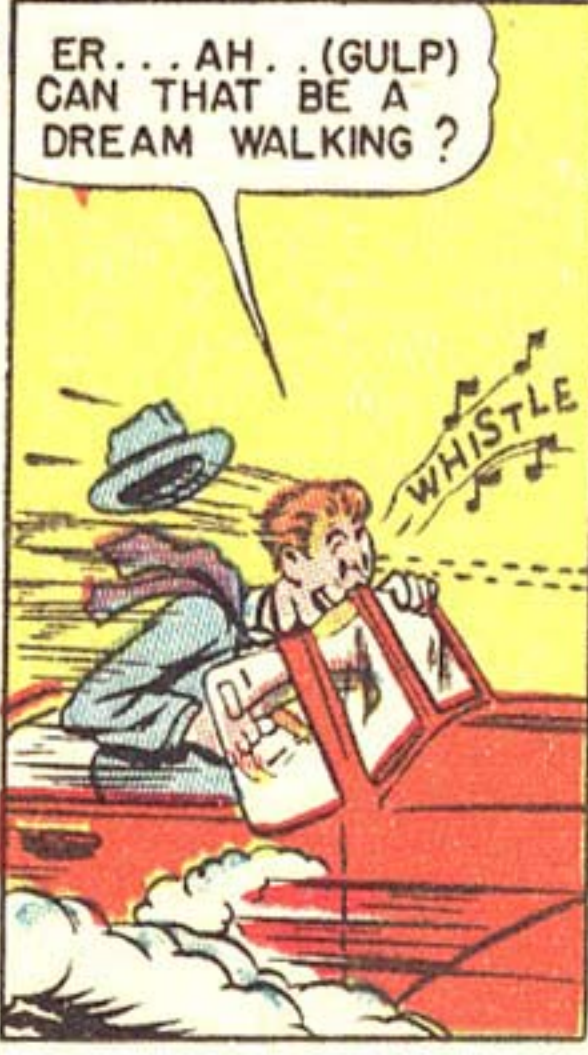
YIPE...I'D BETTER DUCK OUTA HERE BEFORE I END UP WITH CHIEF PRETZEL BENDER!



OGEE, GOLLY...IF ONLY I COULD HITCH A RIDE? HMM I'VE GOT AN IDEA!



HERE COMES A PROSPECT NOW. THIS'LL MAKE 'EM STOP AND GIVE ME A LIFT!



ER...AH...(GULP) CAN THAT BE A DREAM WALKING?



GOING MY WAY, BABE?

ULP! I DON'T THINK SO!



THIS MAY BE SLOW, BUT IT'S SURE!



WILL SUZIE GET TO HOLLYWOOD ??

WATCH FOR THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF SUZIE IN THE NEXT TOPNOTCH LAUGH COMIGS !!



# MEET THE EDITOR

by SCOTT FELDMAN



HARRY SHORTEN

**O**NE bright April morning about a million years ago—or anyway, it *feels* like a million years ago—I meandered over to 60 Hudson Street, to begin work as assistant editorial director for the M.L.J. comic magazines.

I took the elevator up to the third floor, and started to enter the M.L.J. offices at Suite 315. At this point, a man came rolling out and almost knocked me over.

The man was clutching a manuscript in his hand, and he looked as though he had just fallen off a roller-coaster and landed on his head.

Halfway into the long hall which precedes the outer office, I tangled with another man. *This* fellow had an artist's portfolio under his arm, and he looked like he'd fallen off the same roller-coaster.

I later learned that both these men had just emerged from a story conference with Harry Shorten, my new boss . . . and that they'd had their bad ideas tossed out so quickly and new ideas added so quickly that it sent them away pretty much dazed.

Well, maybe I'm exaggerating a bit. Maybe a story conference with Harry Shorten doesn't produce such mind-whirling effects. But I do know that H.S. has the peculiar

knack of considering a story and getting right to the basic wrongs, if any. You can call him a hard editorial master, and you can call him a slave driver, but his habit of working with artists and writers through every stage produces the best comic stories published. You know what I mean if you read his magazines.

Here are some personal details:

Harry Shorten's a young fellow, twenty-seven or twenty-eight. Height, 5-11; weight about 190; all muscle. I remember my first impression when meeting him. "Here," I said to myself, "is a guy I'll never attempt to poke in the snoot." I wasn't surprised when I learned later that Short had starred on the New York University football team (been All-Eastern, in fact) and had later played pro football in the American League.

Unlike many people in the writing business, who pounded typewriters while biting their teething rings, Harry Shorten, up till the time he entered college, had no idea that he was headed for a literary career. But he was on the football team at NYU, and this gave him an idea for a book called, "How to Watch a Football Game." He wrote the book, and the book was published. It had a spectacular sale . . . and this made him think more seriously about writing. He began to write sports stories for the pulp magazines in his spare time.

All this while, he was continuing his college work as a Geology major, and by the time he had graduated with honors, he'd sold so many sports stories that he'd lost count.

Well, he was out of college now, and while he was waiting for something good to develop

in the geology field, he continued to write more sports stories. Then someone asked him to write some stories for the comic magazines. He started on these, and was so successful, that before he knew it he'd been made editorial director up here at M.L.J. Shortly afterwards he was offered an excellent position in Washington as a geologist, and he refused it. . . .

At present, he manages PEP COMICS, ZIP COMICS, TOP-NOTCH LAUGH COMICS, HANGMAN COMICS, JACK-POT COMICS, and SHIELD-WIZARD COMICS. Editing two magazines is a man-sized job; Short edits six, and handles his work capably. He accounts for his ability to get all his work done on deadline to Irving Novick, Bob Montana, Paul Reinman, Carl Hubbell, "Red" Holmdale and all the other crack artists who work for him.

Short's a settled married man now, with a beautiful wife named Rose, and a fifteen-month-old daughter named Melinda who is the sweetest, swellest, cutest, loveliest, most wonderful and amazing baby girl on earth. (Honest, this description is strictly my own opinion. The fact that Short is holding a baseball bat near my head as I write has nothing to do with it.)

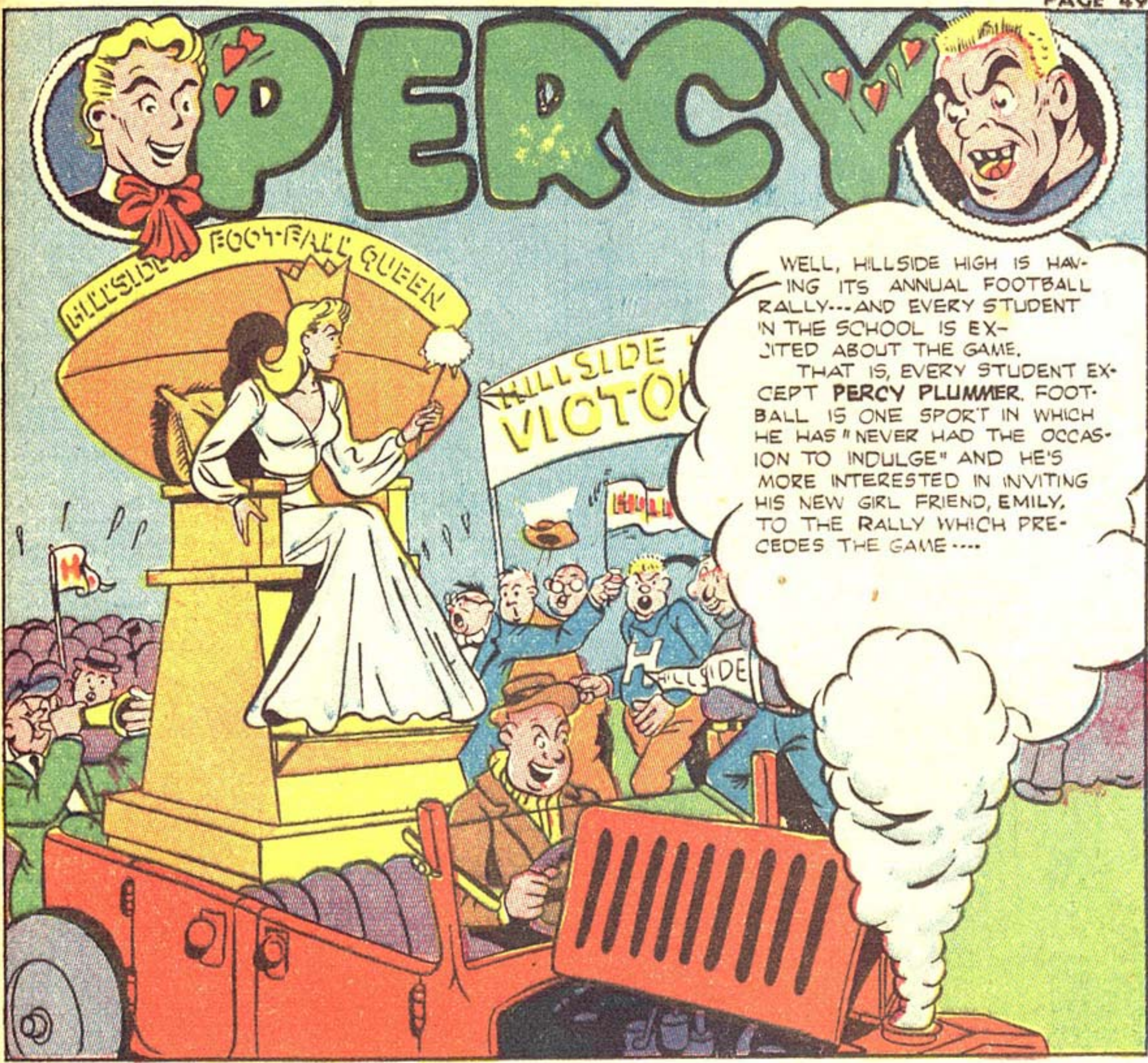
To sum up, it's a pleasure to work for the guy. Yessir, I—wait a minute!

**SCOTT FELDMAN—  
COME HERE!!!!**

Ulp! I guess he's found out about that spelling error I missed when I proofread that Shield story. All right, I'm coming. I'm coming. Keep your shirt on.

**\$\$\$&"\*\*!!!!** There must be an easier way of earning a living!

Coming, boss. . . .



# PERCY

WELL, HILLSIDE HIGH IS HAVING ITS ANNUAL FOOTBALL RALLY...AND EVERY STUDENT IN THE SCHOOL IS EXCITED ABOUT THE GAME. THAT IS, EVERY STUDENT EXCEPT PERCY PLUMMER. FOOTBALL IS ONE SPORT IN WHICH HE HAS "NEVER HAD THE OCCASION TO INDULGE" AND HE'S MORE INTERESTED IN INVITING HIS NEW GIRL FRIEND, EMILY, TO THE RALLY WHICH PRECEDES THE GAME....



I DO HOPE I CAN REACH THEM WITH THIS KICK!

GRACIOUS, PERCY--I-I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD IT IN YOU!

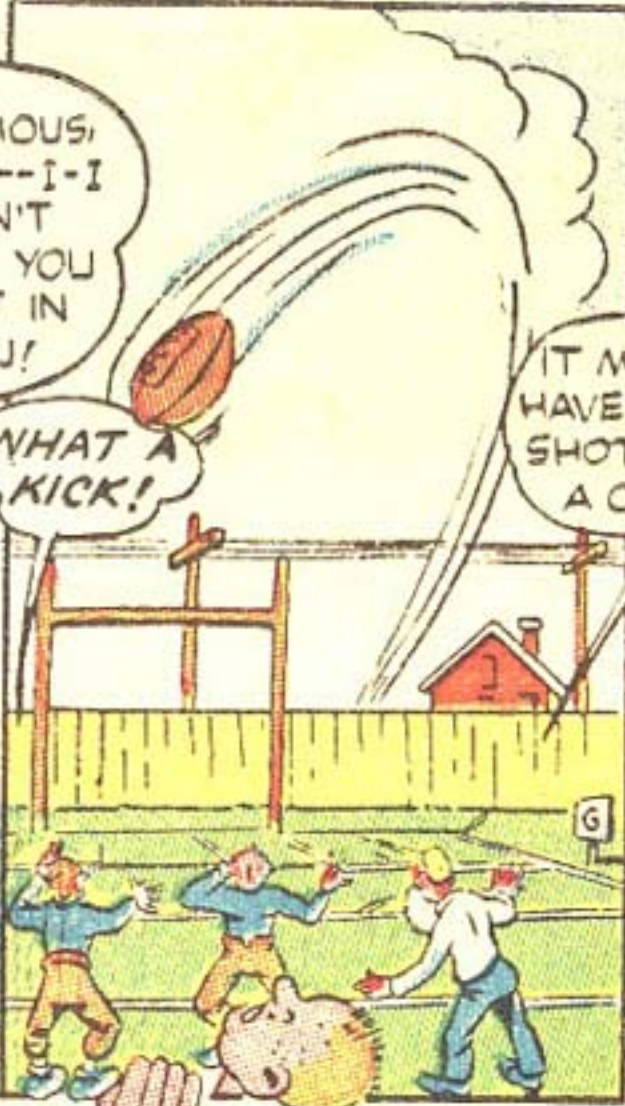
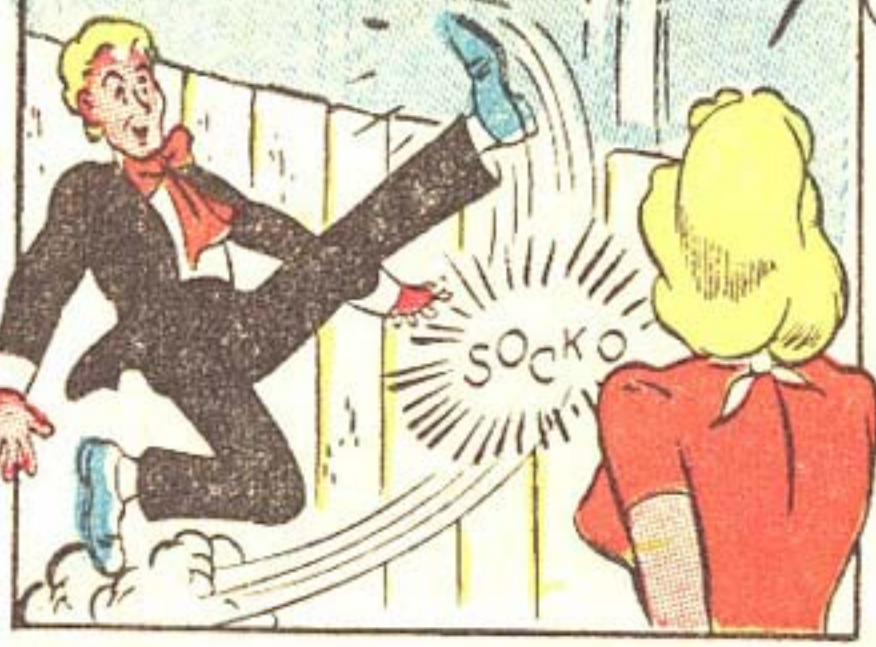
WHAT A KICK!

IT MUST HAVE BEEN SHOT FROM A CANNON!

QUICK, FELLOWS! FIND OUT WHO KICKED THAT BALL-- AND BRING HIM BACK-- DEAD OR ALIVE! WE NEED THAT MAN!

WE GOT YA, COACH--WE'LL GET OUR MAN!

SOCKO



THERE HE IS--- GRAB HIM!

DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!

B--BUT, WHERE ARE YOU TAKING PERCY?

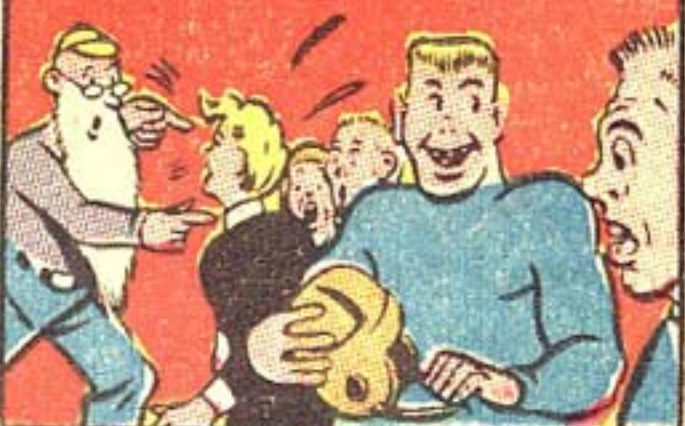
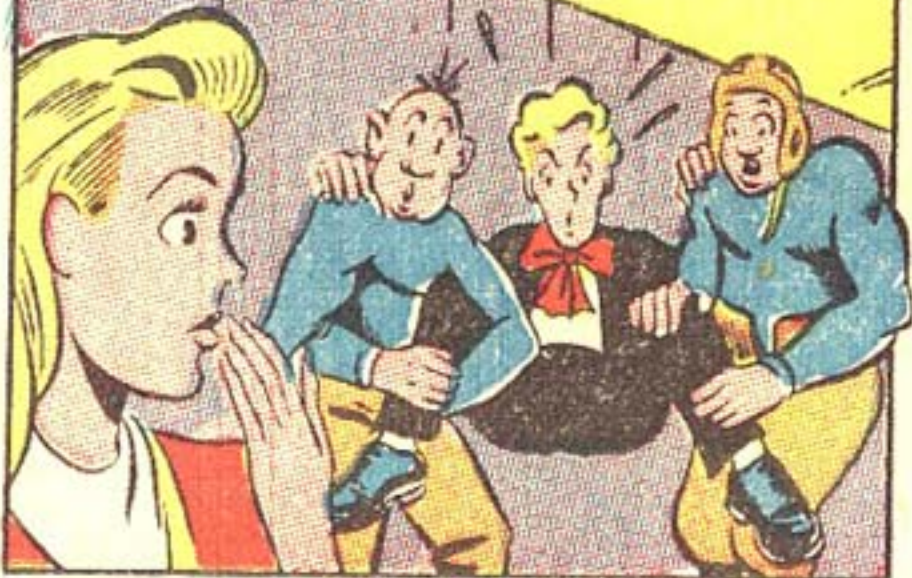
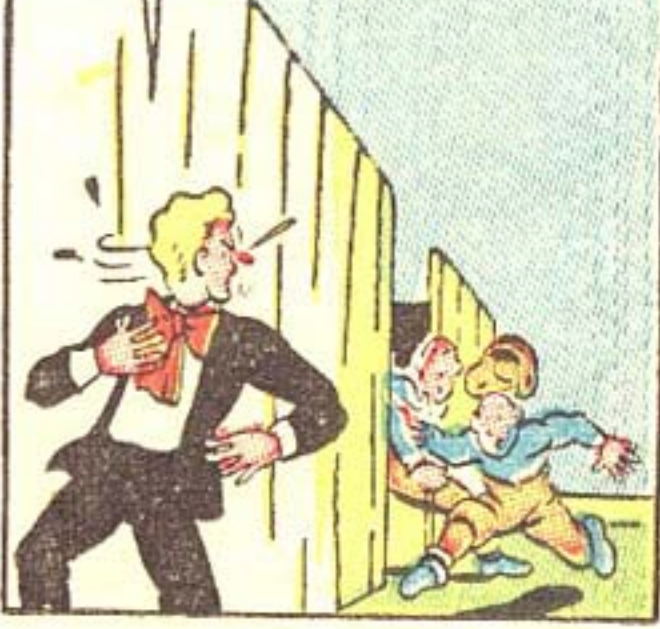
HE HAS NO TIME FOR WOMEN-- THE COACH WANTS HIM RIGHT AWAY!

CAN YA RUN-- BLOCK AND THROW PASSES!

I--I THINK SO!

THINKING AIN'T DOING IT-- EH, SPIKE?

W--WHAT DO YOU WANT?



NEVER MIND THE WISE CRACKS, BUTCH, AND START RUNNING AFTER THIS PASS, PERCY'S GOING TO THROW TO YA!

DO YA THINK HE CAN REACH ME?

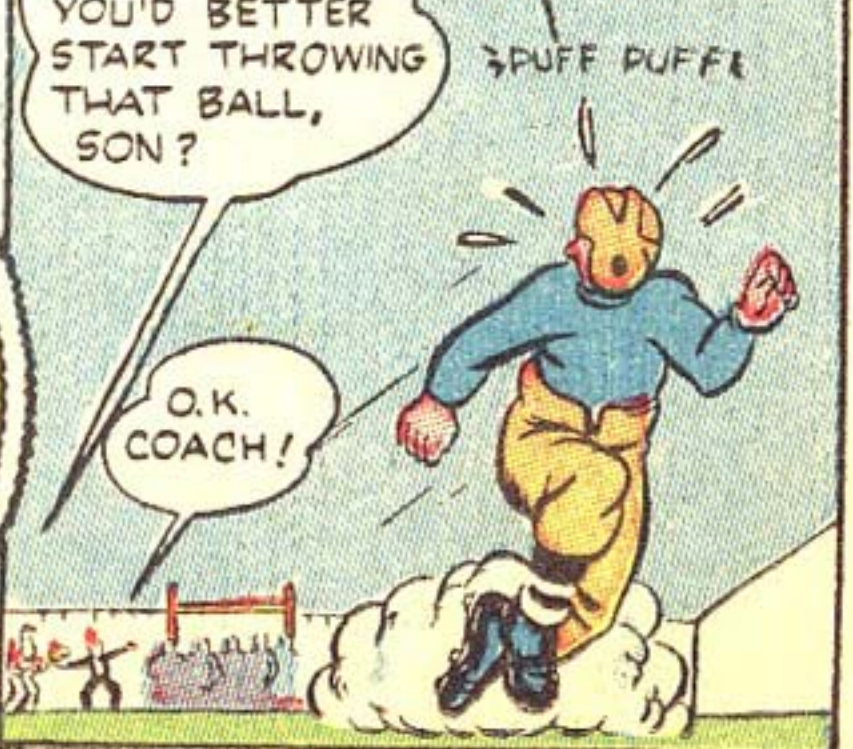
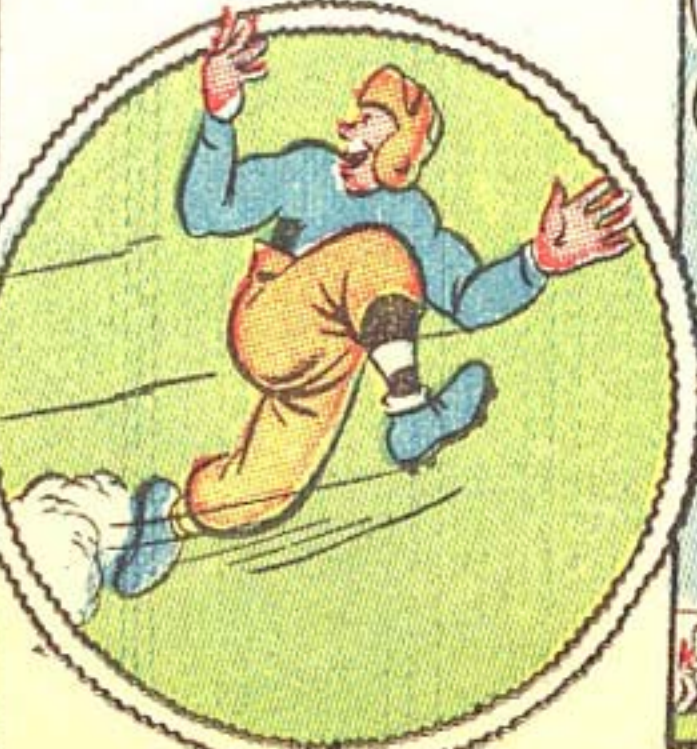
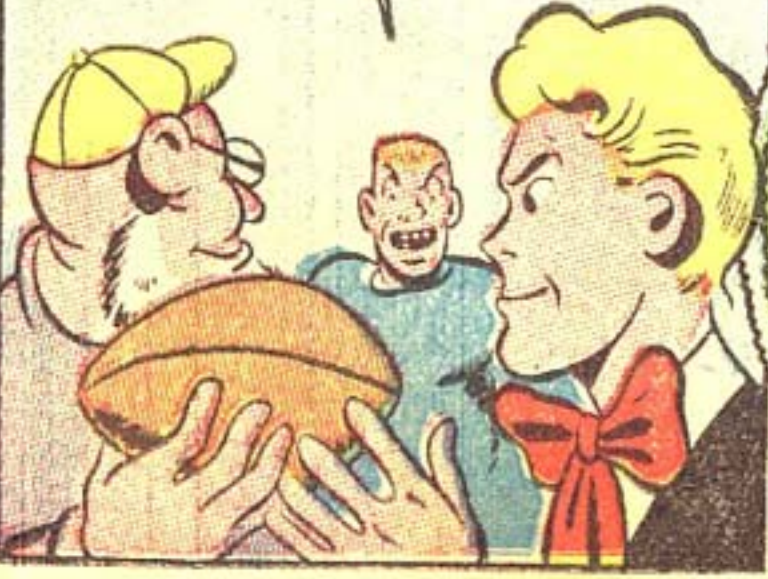
OK, POICY, START TOSSING THAT PIG SKIN-- AND WATCH ME SNAG IT!

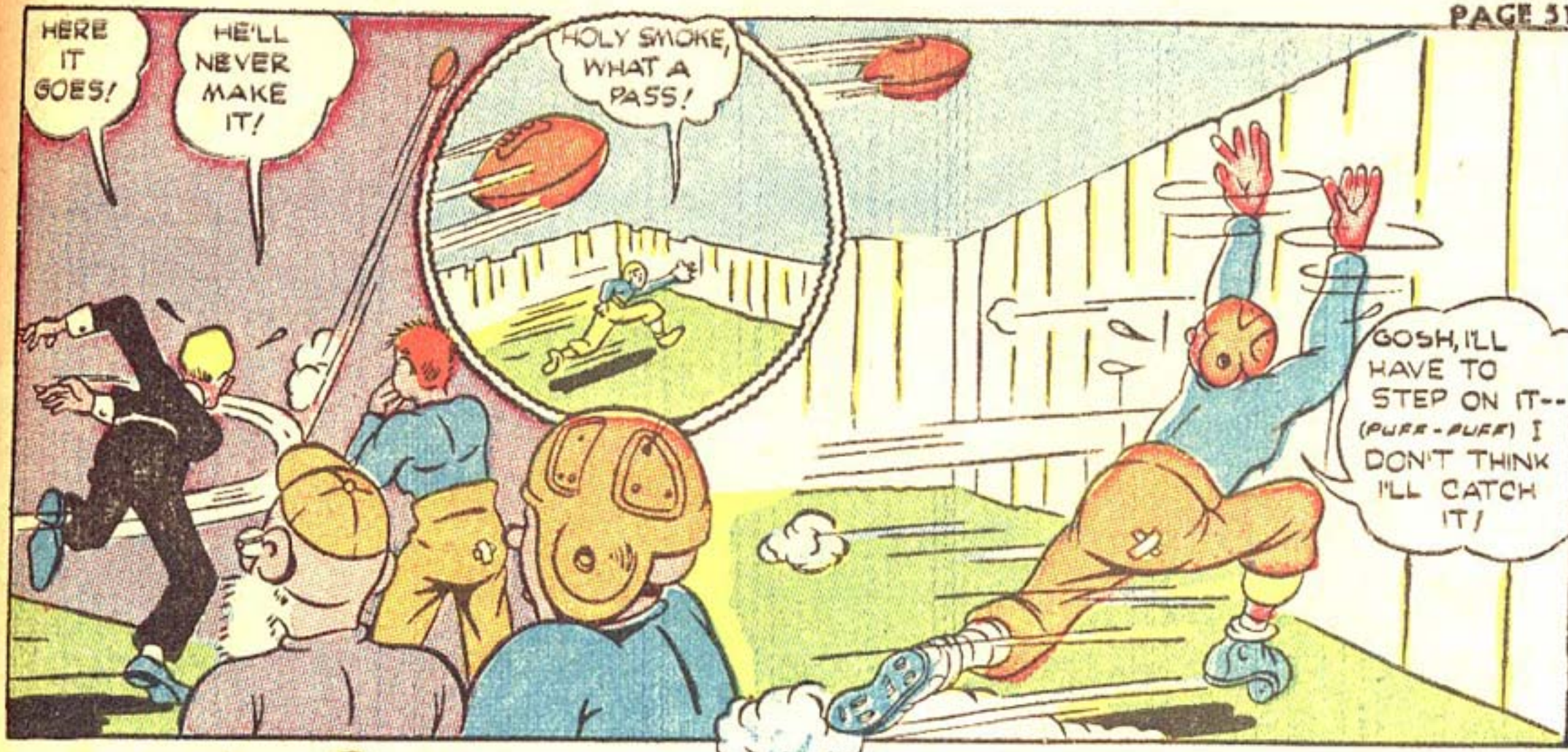
HOLY SOCKS! AIN'T THAT GUY GOING TO HEAVE THAT PASS? I'VE NEARLY RUN THE LENGTH OF THE FIELD!

DON'T YA THINK YOU'D BETTER START THROWING THAT BALL, SON?

PUFF PUFF

O.K. COACH!

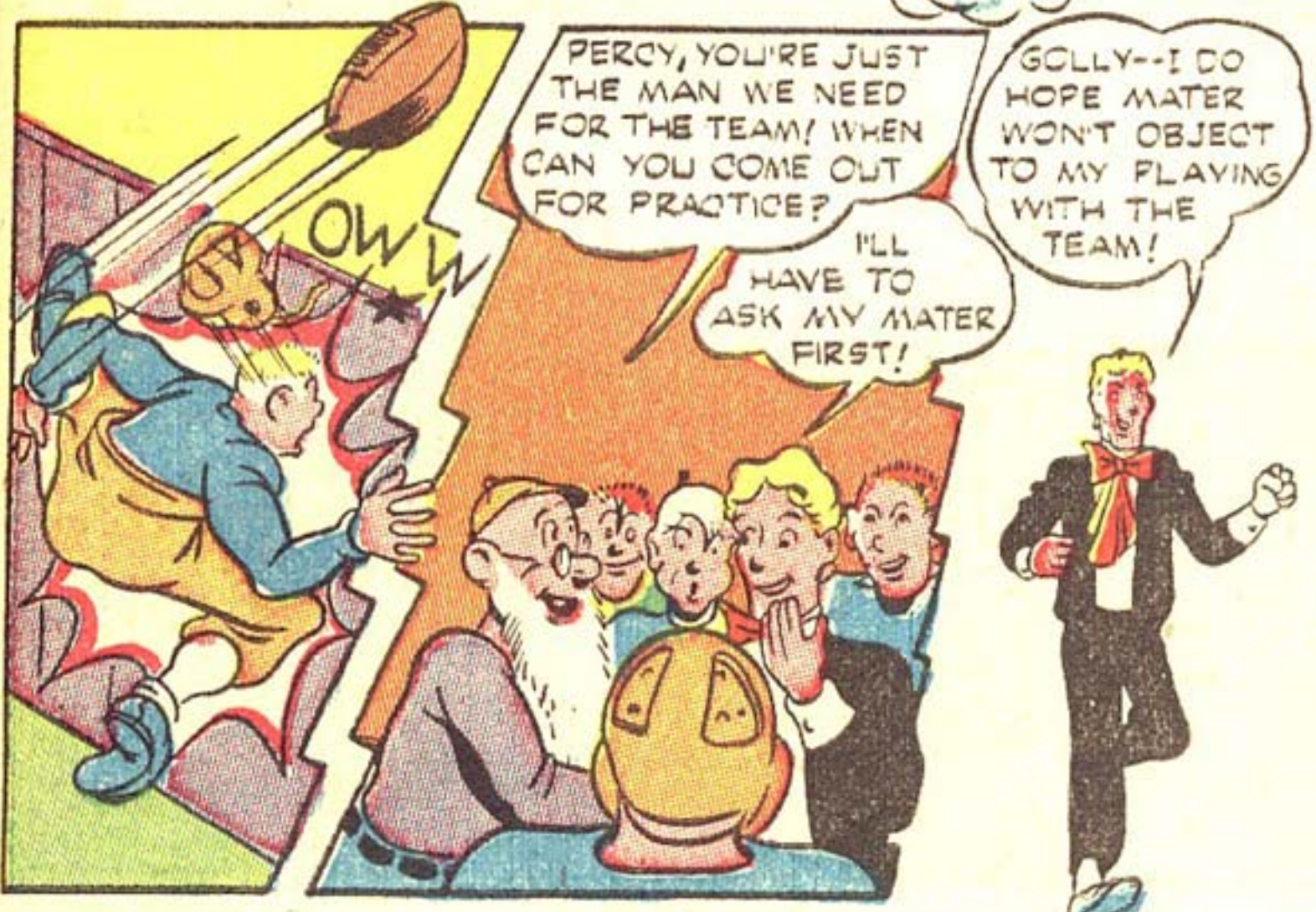




HERE IT GOES!  
HE'LL NEVER MAKE IT!

HOLY SMOKE, WHAT A PASS!

GOSH, I'LL HAVE TO STEP ON IT-- (PUFF-PUFF) I DON'T THINK I'LL CATCH IT!



PERCY, YOU'RE JUST THE MAN WE NEED FOR THE TEAM! WHEN CAN YOU COME OUT FOR PRACTICE?

GOLLY--I DO HOPE MATER WON'T OBJECT TO MY PLAYING WITH THE TEAM!

I'LL HAVE TO ASK MY MATER FIRST!



PERCIVAL, HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU I WON'T HAVE YOU PARTICIPATING IN ANY OF THOSE ROUGHNECK GAMES?

B-BUT, MATER!



SANTA MARIA! !!G?? I QUIT!

SUCH OUTBURSTS, TONY! IT'S VERY DISGUSTING!

DISGUSTING IS RIGHT! I IS A DISGUSTED TOO! ALL A DAY I COOK A DA CORN BEEF FOR MR. PLUMMER'S POKER PARTY TONIGHT, AND WHAT A HAPPENS...!

NOW I FINDA DA FOOT BALL IN DE COOKING POT-- ATSA TOO MUCH! I QUIT!

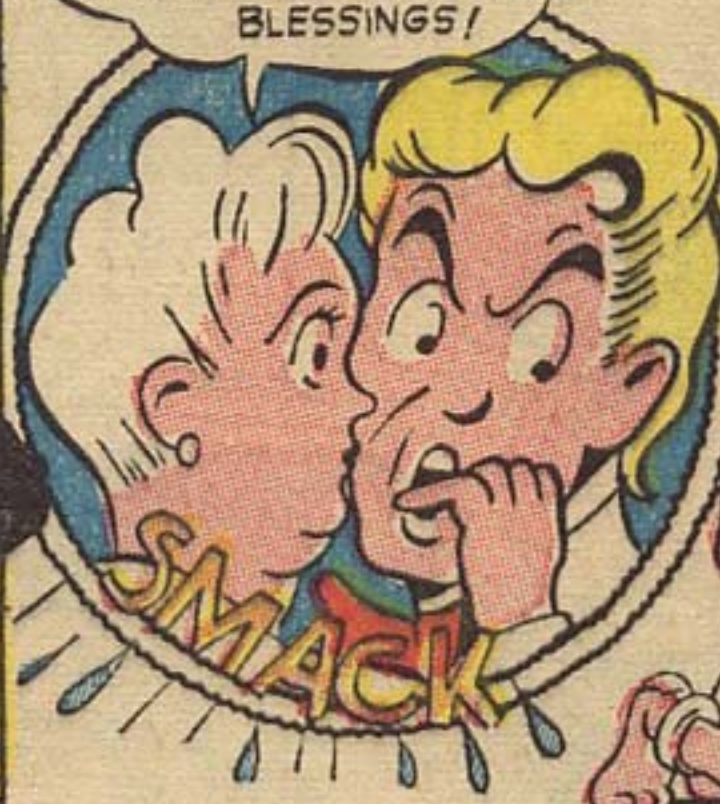
OH OH! GUESS THAT I'D BETTER CALL OFF MY POKER PARTY!

SUDDENLY...

DO YOU REALLY MEAN I WON'T HAVE TO PUT UP WITH ALL THOSE SMELLY CIGARS AND THAT HORRIBLE CORN BEEF ODOR TONIGHT?

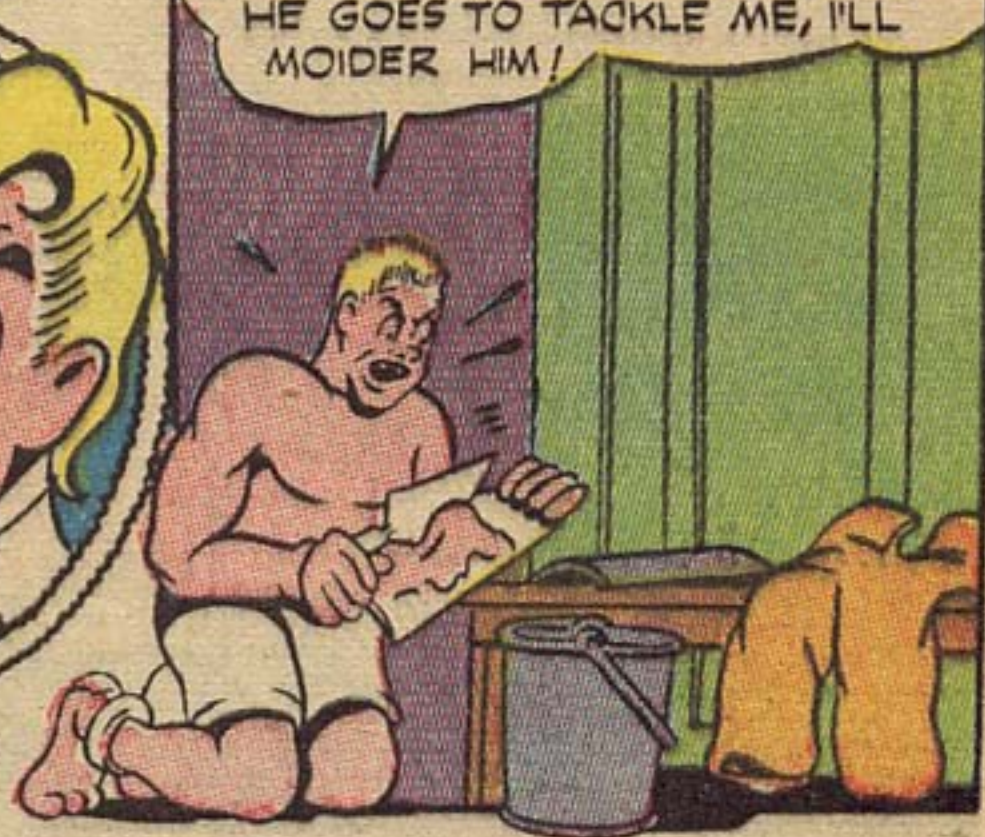


HOW WONDERFUL! AND TO THINK THAT I HAVE YOU AND THAT PRECIOUS GAME OF FOOTBALL TO THANK! GO AHEAD AND PLAY WITH THE TEAM WITH MY BLESSINGS!



MEANWHILE IN THE TEAM'S DRESSING ROOM---

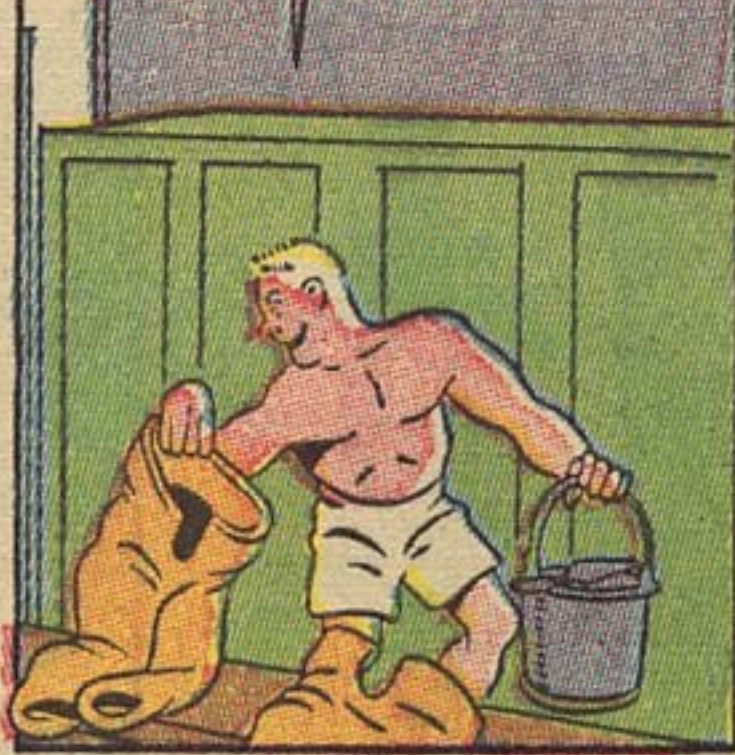
I'LL FIX THAT SISSY WHEN HE REPORTS FOR PRACTICE BY PUTTING CEMENT ON MY THIGH PADS! WHEN HE GOES TO TACKLE ME, I'LL MOIDER HIM!



HAW, HAW--THAT POICV'LL BE PULVERIZED WHEN I HIT HIM!



NOW WE'RE ALL SET--I'LL JUST LEAVE MY PANTS HERE WHILE I GET RID OF THIS CEMENT!



MEANWHILE PERCY AND THE COACH ENTER DURING BUTCH'S ABSENCE---

WE'LL BE STARTING PRACTICE IN A FEW MINUTES, PERCY--SO HUSTLE AND GET YOURSELF A UNIFORM AND REPORT OUT ON THE FIELD!



YOU CAN TAKE A PAIR OF THOSE PANTS ON THE BENCH, PERCY!



THANK YOU, SIR!

GOLLY--THESE PANTS SEEM AWFULLY HEAVY!



LATER ON THE FIELD--

O.K. FELLOWS LET'S GET GOING WITH THE PRACTICING!

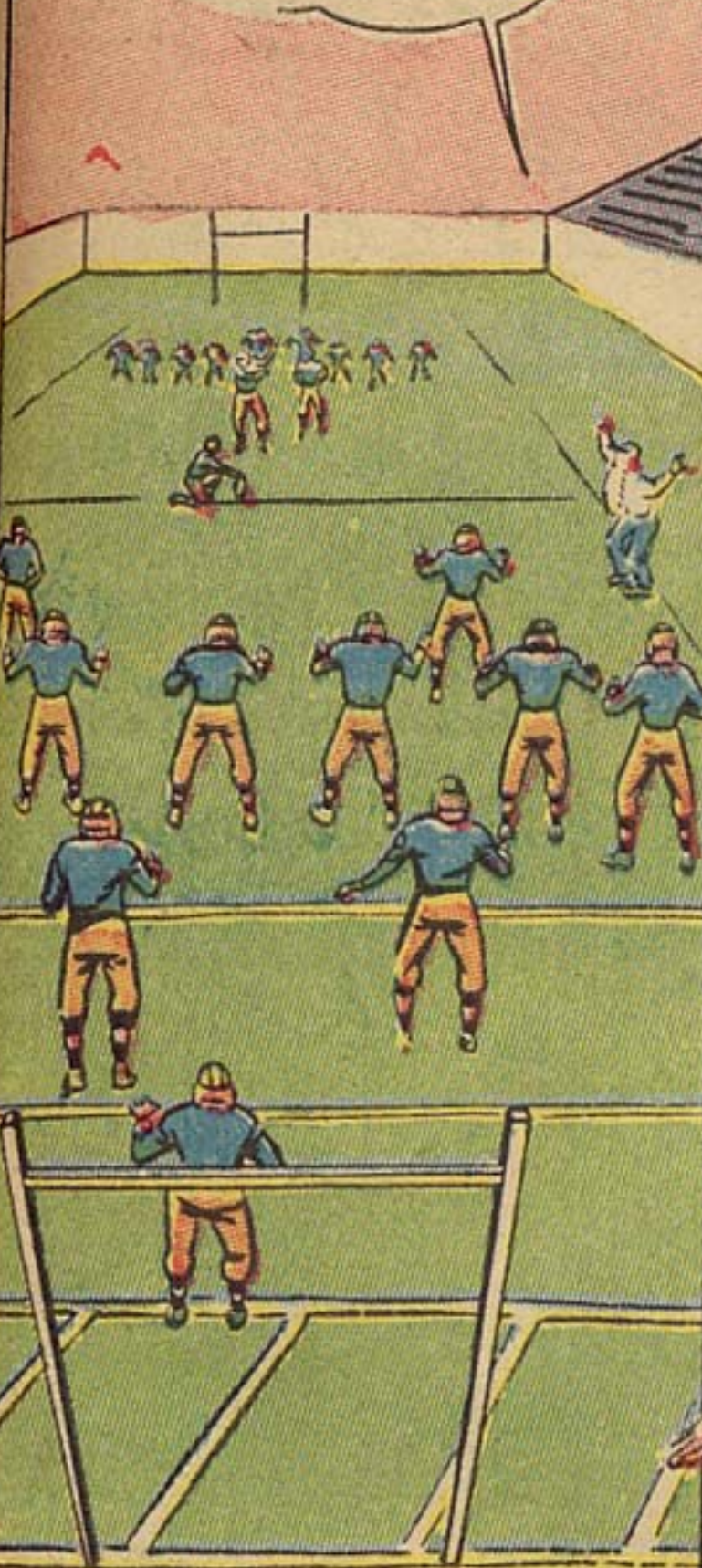


COMING, COACH!

TWEET TWEET

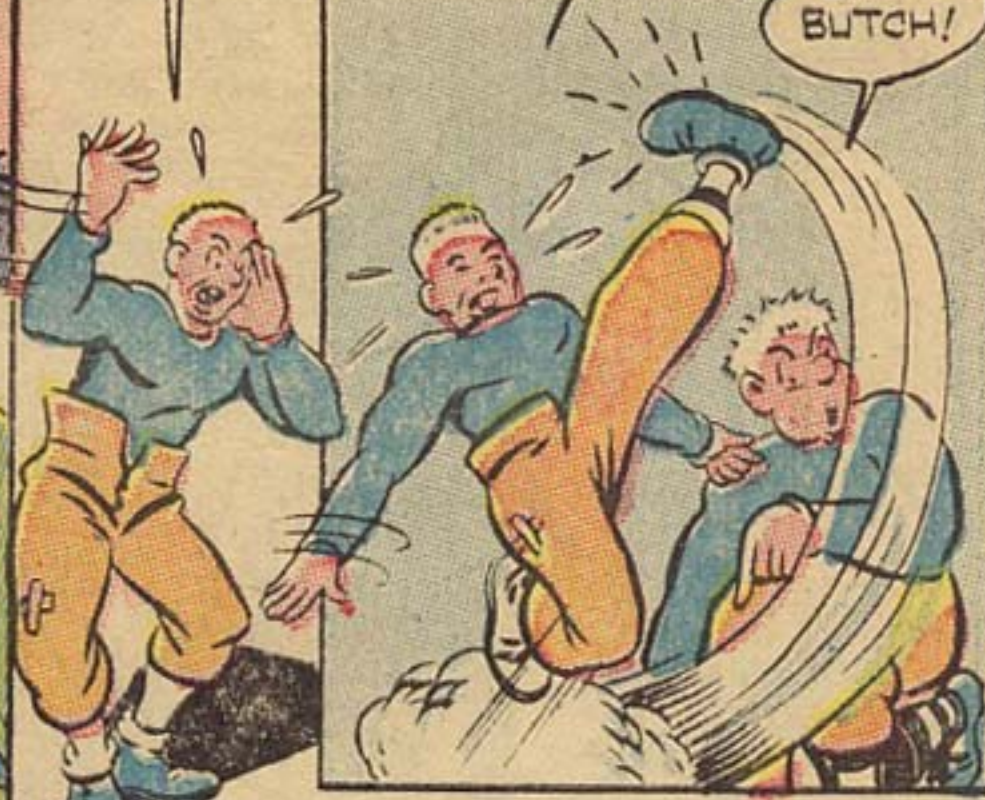
BUTCH'S KICK GOES RIGHT TO PERCY!

ALL SET FOR THE KICK-OFF, EH? HEY, BUTCH, YOU'D BETTER PUT YOUR HELMET ON!



NAW, COACH! I'M TOO RUGGED!

OOFF--I HOPE DAT SISSY CAN CATCH THIS!



NICE BOOT, BUTCH!



I GOT IT, FELLOWS!

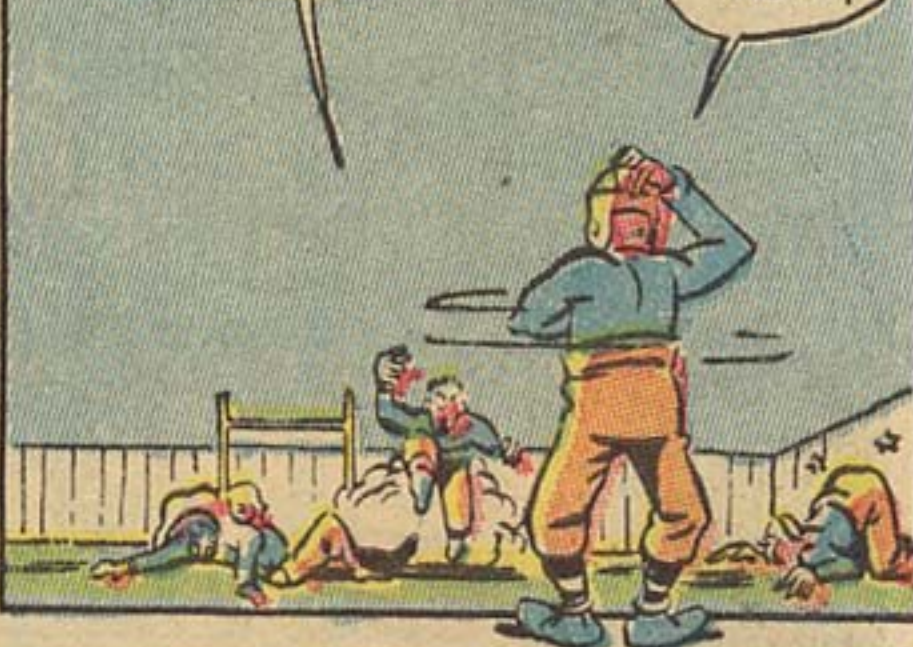
HOLY CATS--- THESE PANTS SEEM TO BE HOLDING ME DOWN!



BY SOME TRICK OF FATE, ALL THE MEN HAVE BEEN BLOCKED OUT--- SO IT'S ONLY PERCY AND BUTCH IN PLAY ON THE FIELD.....

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THAT GUY? HE'S NOT EVEN RUNNING!

OH! OH! I CAN HARDLY MOVE!



HEY, WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH PERCY, HE'S HARDLY MOVING! THE KID'LL GET MURDERED WHEN BUTCH KICKLES HIM!



OH BOY, I GOT HIM! NOW TO GIVE HIM THE WORKS!



THE NEXT DAY...

WOE IS ME! THAT GUY MUST BE MADE OF IRON! OH! OH! THERE'S THE DOOR-- COME IN!

KNOCK  
KNOCK  
KNOCK

WE JUST DROPPED IN TO SEE HOW YOU FEEL MASTER BUTCH!

IT MUST HAVE BEEN TERRIBLE, BUTCH! PERCY TOLD ME OF YOUR ACCIDENT-- RUNNING IN-TO A DOOR!

HE DID?

WHY, YES! BUT HOW COULD A DOOR DO SO MUCH DAMAGE, BUTCH?

I FORGOT TO STATE IT WAS A SWINGING DOOR--EH, BUTCH?



I'M SORRY, EMILY, I WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE YOU TO THE FOOTBALL RALLY TONIGHT!

I KNOW, BUTCH--AND I'M TO BE THE CARNIVAL QUEEN!

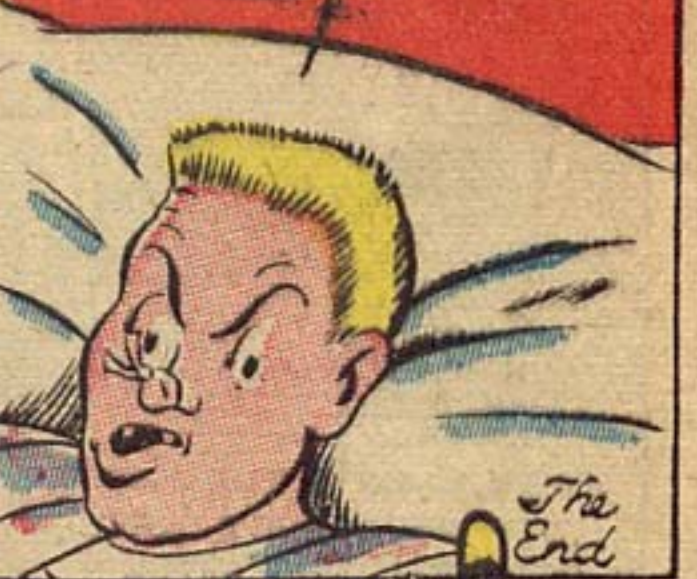
IF I MAY SUGGEST-- MAY I ESCORT YOU TO THE RALLY?

WOULD YOU PERCY? MY, IS THIS JUST TOO WONDERFUL!

YEAH! JUST WONDERFUL!



BOY, THAT POLICY SURE WORKS FAST-- HE'S KINDA DECEIVING TO LOOK AT, BUT--HE SURE GETS RESULTS! I'LL GET EVEN WITH HIM YET! WAIT'LL YOU SEE NEXT MONTH'S TOP-NOTCH LAUGH COMICS!!



The End



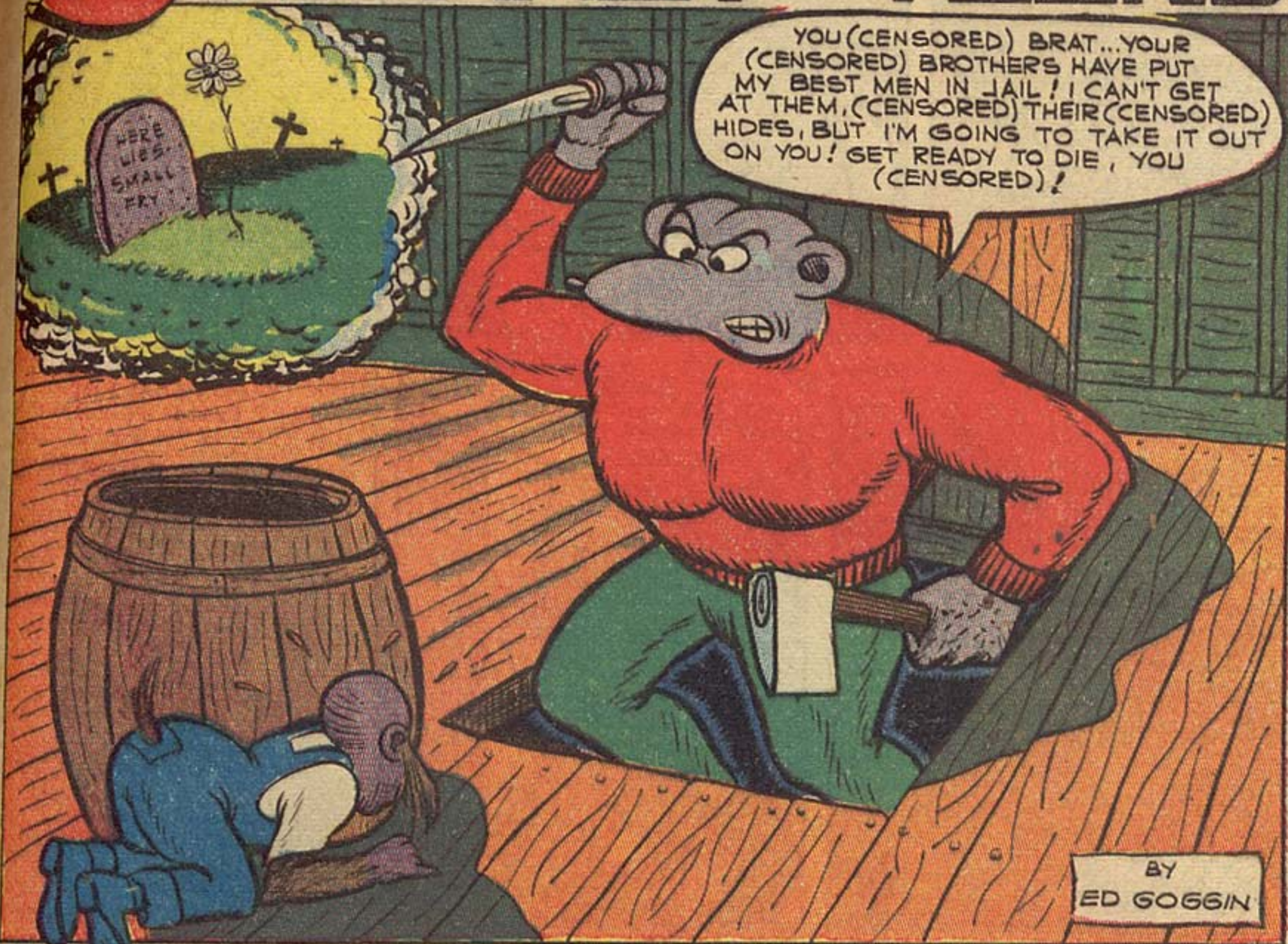
HEY READER, HAVE YA HEARD THE BIG NEWS! I'M GOING TO HAVE MY OWN BIG COMIC MAGAZINE SOON!! SO WATCH FOR ME AT YOUR NEWSSTANDS!! OH, YEAH, JUGHEAD, VERONICA, AND BETTY WILL BE THERE TOO!!

DON'T FORGET US!!



THEY'LL ALL BE IN ARCHIE COMICS, TOO, LOOK FOR 'EM!

# THE 3 MONKEY-TEERS



YOU (CENSORED) BRAT...YOUR (CENSORED) BROTHERS HAVE PUT MY BEST MEN IN JAIL! I CAN'T GET AT THEM, (CENSORED) THEIR (CENSORED) HIDES, BUT I'M GOING TO TAKE IT OUT ON YOU! GET READY TO DIE, YOU (CENSORED)!

BY ED GOGGIN



WAIT A MINUTE...THREE BIRDS IN THE HAND ARE BETTER THAN ONE...HMM... I HAVE AN IDEA!

COME ALONG, LITTLE FELLOW! AFTER ALL, I'VE BEEN A BIT HASTY... I'VE COOLED OFF NOW! WOULD YOU LIKE A NICE PRESENT?



HERE'S A BIG BAG OF PEANUTS ALL FOR YOU, LITTLE FRIEND! I LIKE YOU, SO I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU TO LIVE WITH ME AT MY COUNTRY ESTATE! HOW DO YOU LIKE THAT?

G-GOSH! THANKS, MR. FAGIN!



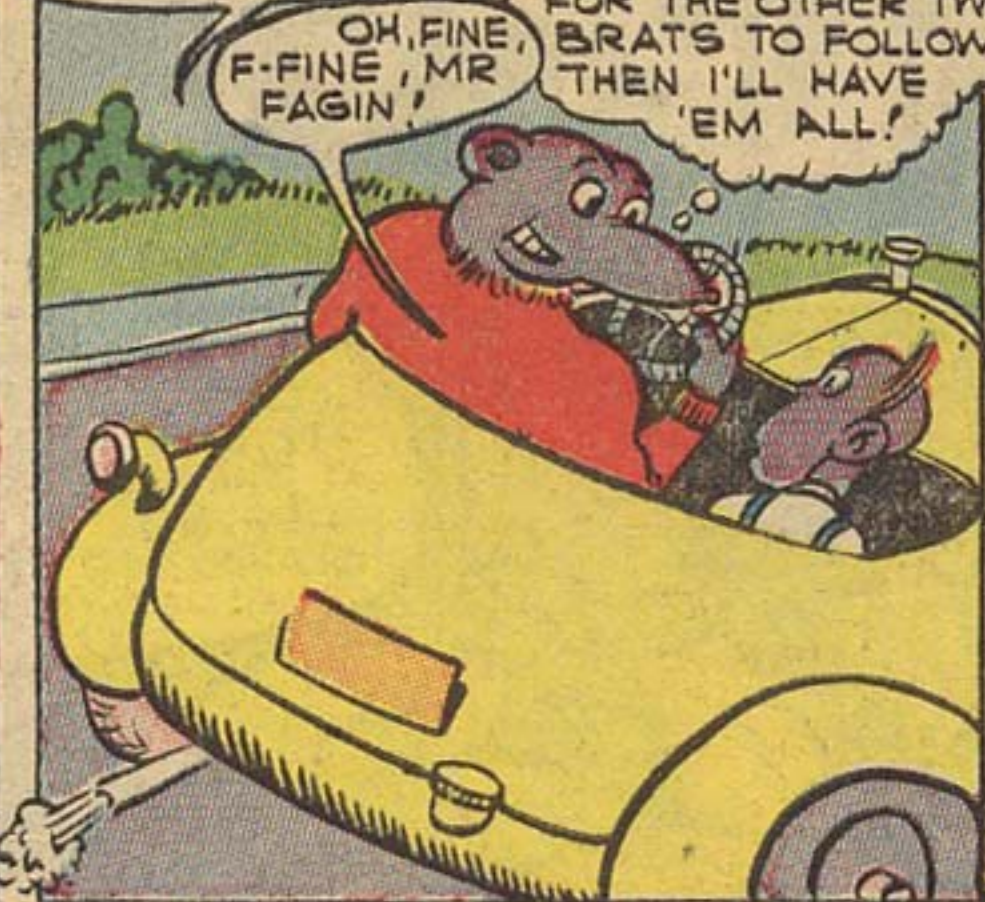


I'M NOT SO DUMB! I'LL LEAVE A TRAIL OF PEANUT SHUCKS FOR MY BROTHERS TO FOLLOW!



ENJOYING THE RIDE, SMALL FRY? HOW ARE THE PEANUTS, M'BOY?

OH, FINE, F-FINE, MR FAGIN!

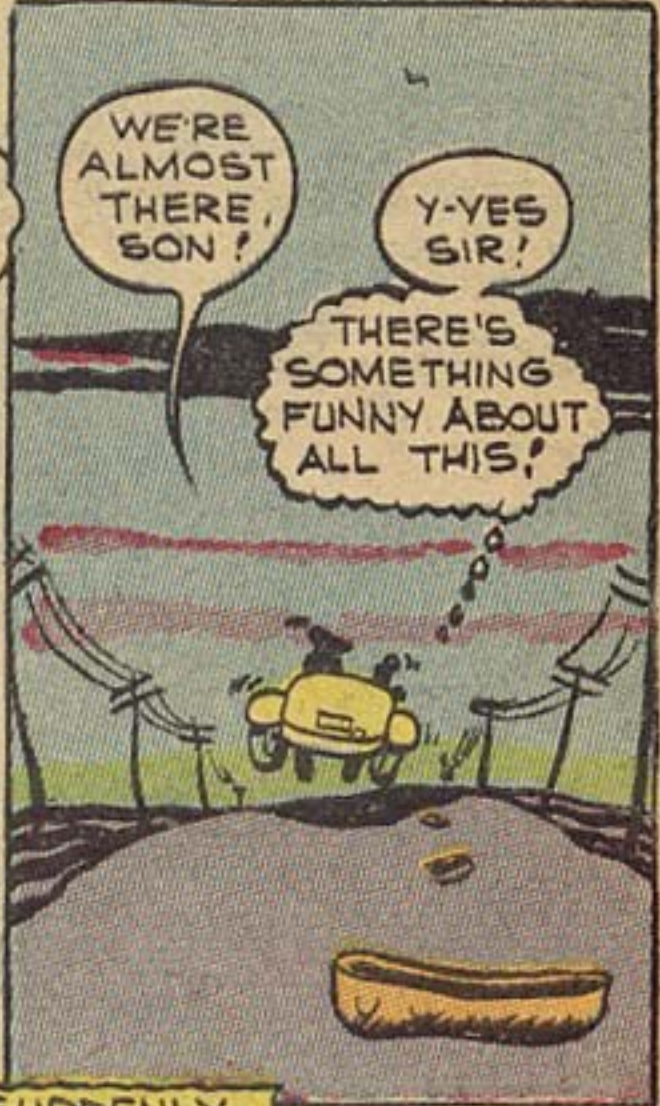


SUCKER! EVERYTHING'S GOING JUST AS I PLANNED! HE'LL LEAVE A TRAIL FOR THE OTHER TWO BRATS TO FOLLOW! THEN I'LL HAVE 'EM ALL!

WE'RE ALMOST THERE, SON!

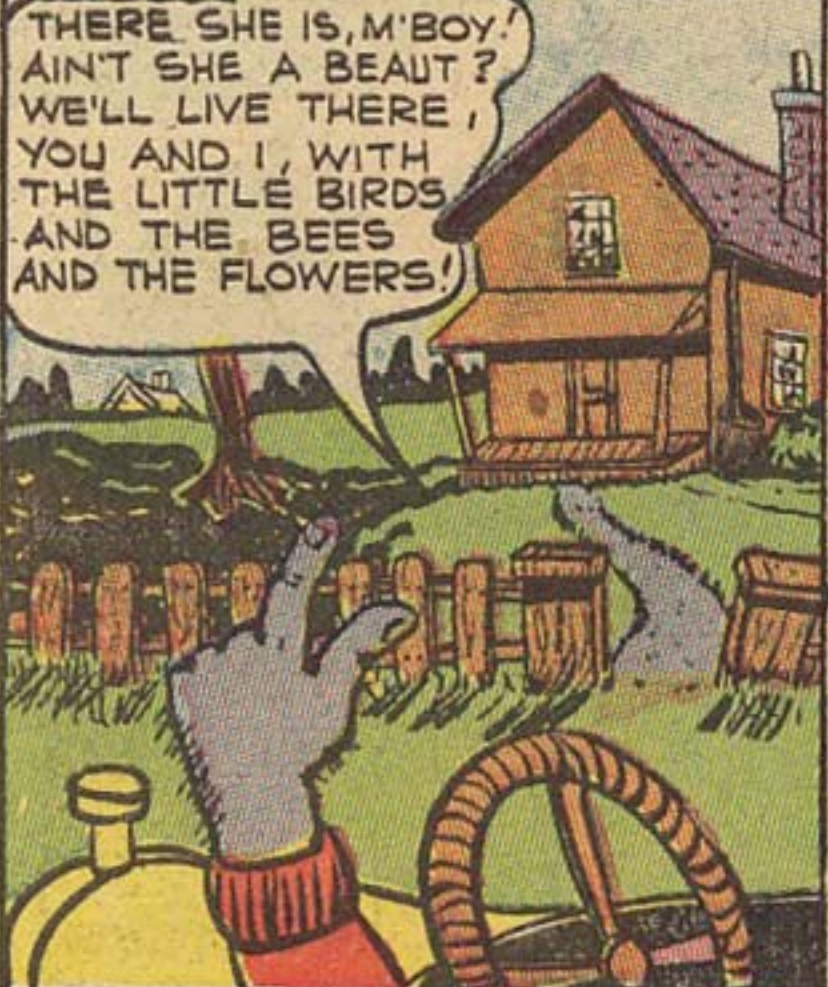
Y-YES SIR!

THERE'S SOMETHING FUNNY ABOUT ALL THIS!



LATER...

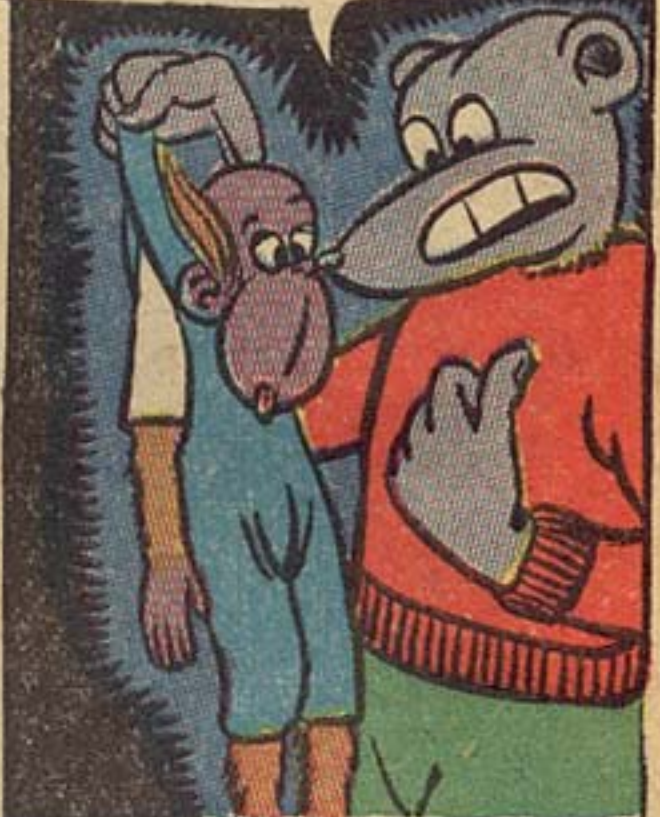
THERE SHE IS, M'BOY! AIN'T SHE A BEAUT? WE'LL LIVE THERE, YOU AND I, WITH THE LITTLE BIRDS AND THE BEES AND THE FLOWERS!



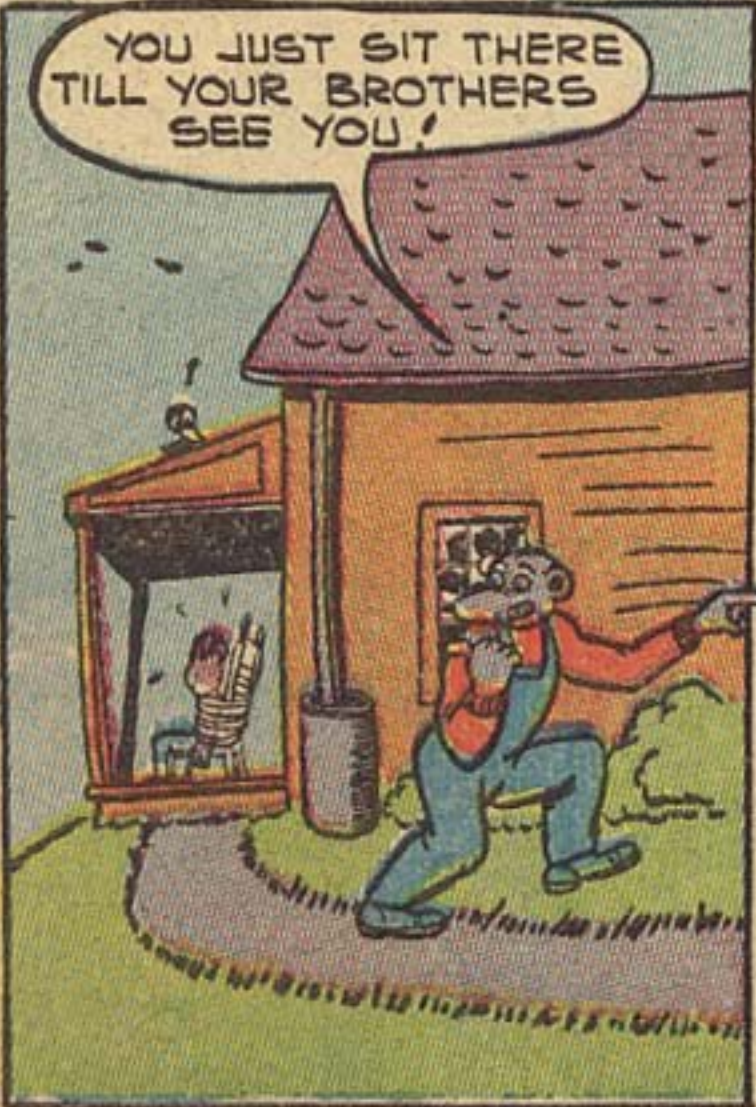
GO RIGHT IN, LITTLE MAN, AND MAKE YOURSELF T'HOME, HEH, HEH, HEH!



SUDDENLY... NOW, YOU FOOL! DID YOU THINK I'D FORGIVE AND FORGET? SOON I'LL HAVE YOUR TWO !\*?\*# BROTHERS!



YOU JUST SIT THERE TILL YOUR BROTHERS SEE YOU!



HEH, HEH, THEY'LL HAVE TO PASS THIS AREA TO GET TO THAT !!\*?\*# SMALL FRY!



FINISHED! NOW TO SIT BACK AND WAIT!



MEANWHILE AT FAGIN'S HANGOUT IN THE CITY, YEHUDI COMES CAUTIOUSLY UP THE CREAKY STAIRS...

G-GOSH! I HOPE I CAN FIND SASS AND SMALL FRY! THEY WERE HERE WHEN MR. FLIPPER TOOK ME AWAY BEFORE HE WAS PUT IN JAIL!

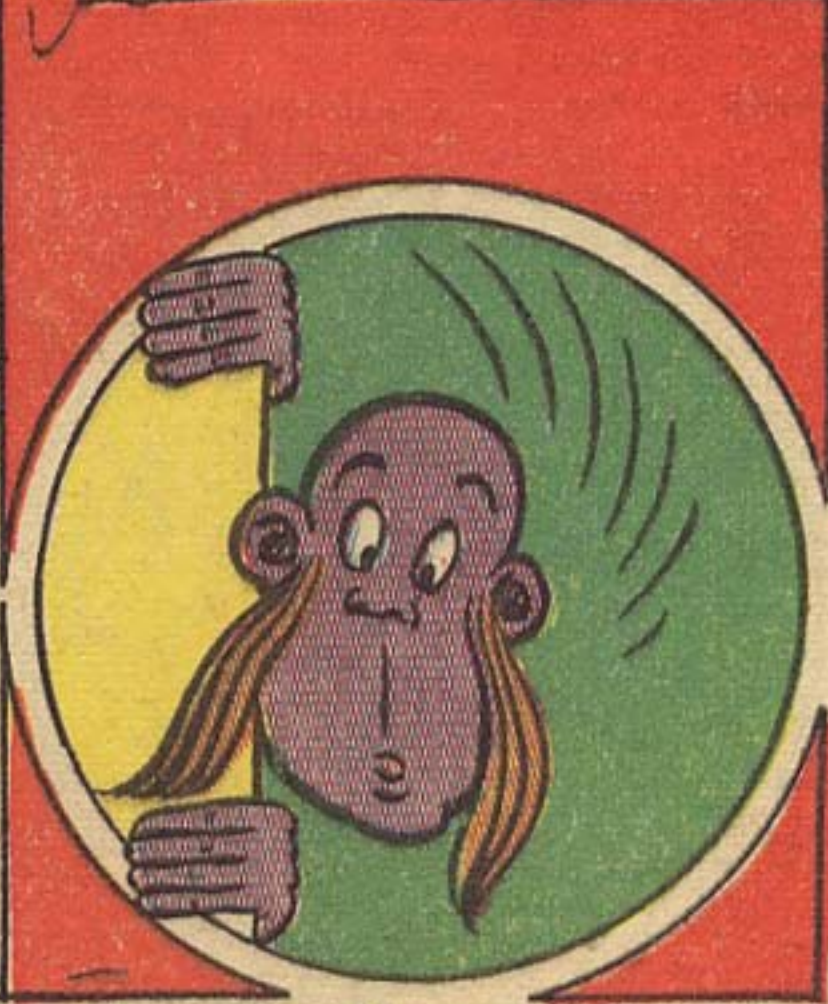


SUDDENLY...



OH GOLLY... SOMEONE'S COMING! (GULP)

A FACE APPEARS.. SASSAFRAS



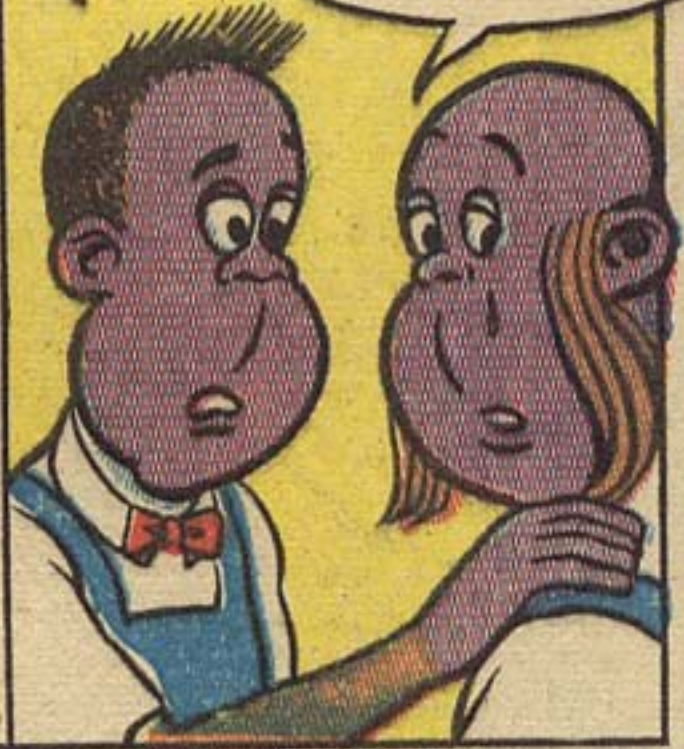
GOSH, I'M GL. D TO SEE YOU, SASS! I THOUGHT IT WAS THAT NASTY OLD MR. FAGIN!

B-BUT WHERE IS SMALL FRY... HAVE YOU SEEN HIM?

U-P! GOSH, NO! MR. FAGIN HAD HIM TIED HERE WHEN MR. GOBBLE MADE ME HELP HIM STEAL ALL THOSE JEWELS!

SUDDENLY

LOOK!



I WANNA SEE SMALL FRY - NOT PEANUT SHELLS!

DON'T YOU REMEMBER - SMALL FRY ALWAYS ATE PEANUTS! WE'LL FOLLOW THE SHELLS AND FIND HIM JUST LIKE WE USED TO BACK HOME!

THEY WENT OUT THIS WAY AND DOWN THE ROAD! COME ON, SASS!

G-GOSH, YEHUDI, I HOPE YOU'RE RIGHT!



AND SO FOR MANY WEARY MILES THE TWO FOLLOW THE TRAIL IN SEARCH OF THEIR BROTHER...



MINUTES LATER...

THEY'VE FALLEN INTO MY TRAP!

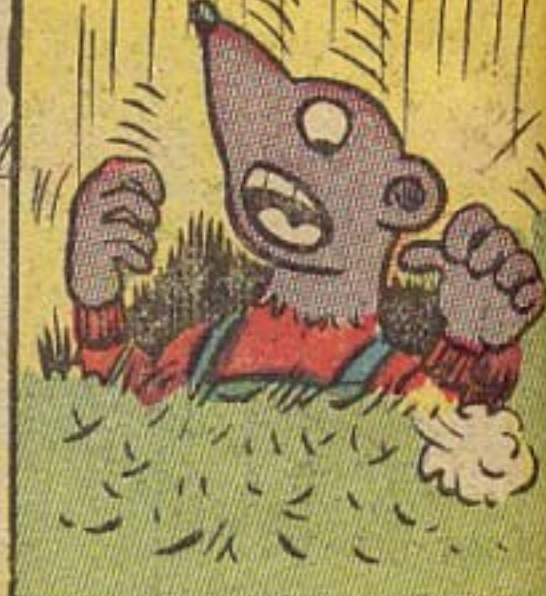
CRASH



NOW TO SNEAK UP AND DRAG 'EM OUT AND POLISH OFF THE THREE OF 'EM! BOY, WILL I...



CRASH

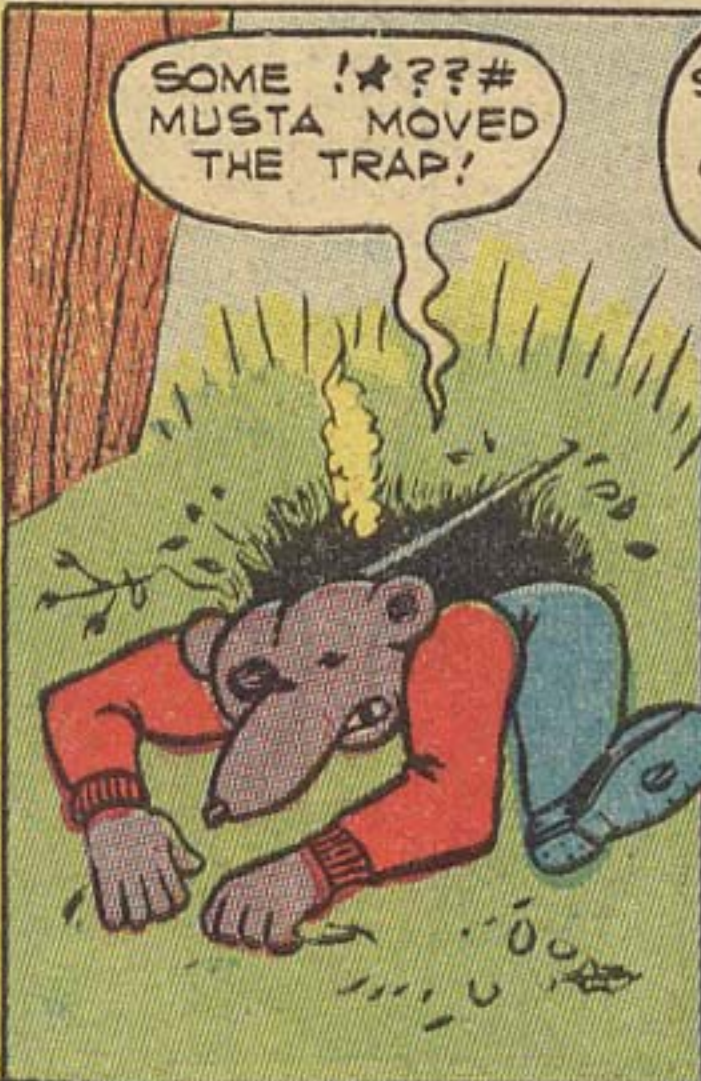


AT THAT MOMENT...

GOSH, THERE'S SMALL FRY SITTING ON THAT PORCH!



SOME !\*??# MUSTA MOVED THE TRAP!



GOLLY, SMALL FRY, I'M SURE GLAD TO SEE YOU!

I KNEW YOU'D FIND ME!

HURRY WITH THE ROPES! FAGIN MAY COME BACK ANY MOMENT!



SUDDENLY...

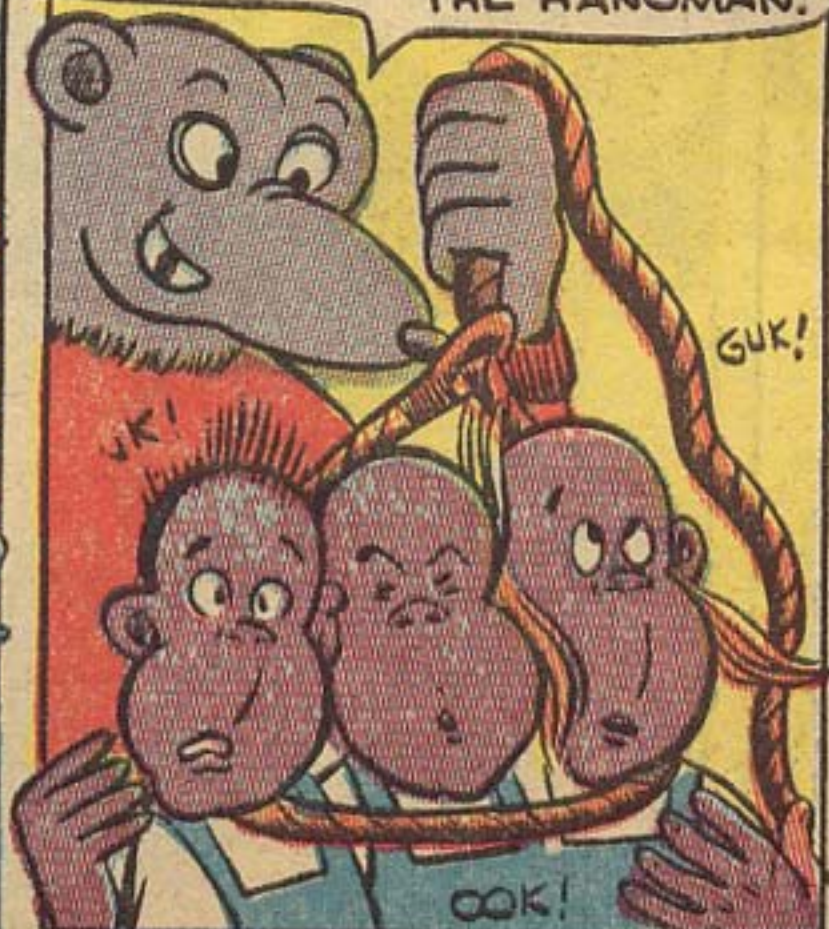
HERE'S A TRICK I LEARNED FROM A COMIC BOOK CHARACTER NAMED THE HANGMAN!

QUIET, FELLOWS, AND WE'LL SOON BE ON THE WAY BACK HOME!



BUT--BUT, MR. FAGIN, WE DIDN'T MOVE YOUR TRAP!... HONEST WE DIDN'T!

SHUT UP AND KEEP MOVING! I GOT A COUPLE OF SURPRISES FOR YOU!

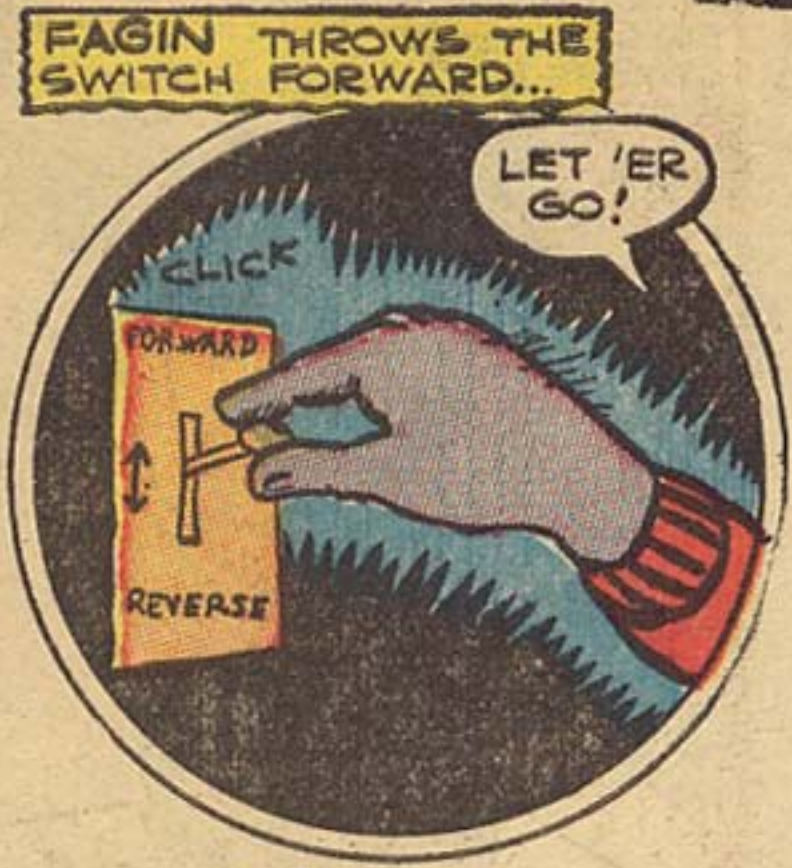




NOW FOR A LITTLE... ER... CLEAN FUN... FIRST YOU, YEHUDI!



SEE THIS SAW? SOON AS I THROW THE SWITCH, THE BELT'LL MOVE—AND YOU'LL BE CUT RIGHT IN HALF! HEH, HEH, HAPPY, SON?

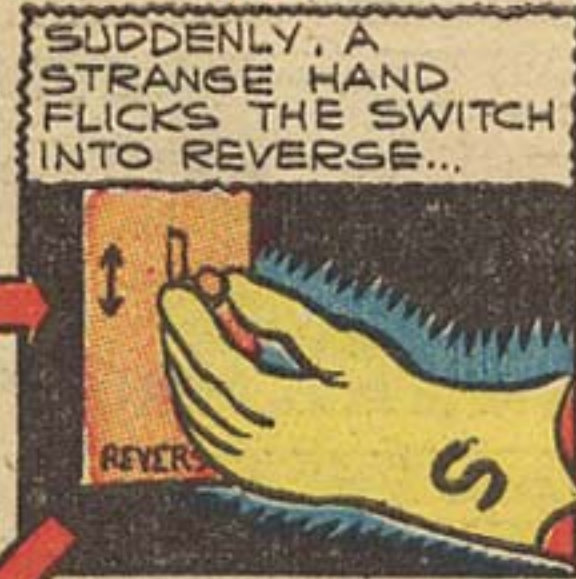


FAGIN THROWS THE SWITCH FORWARD...

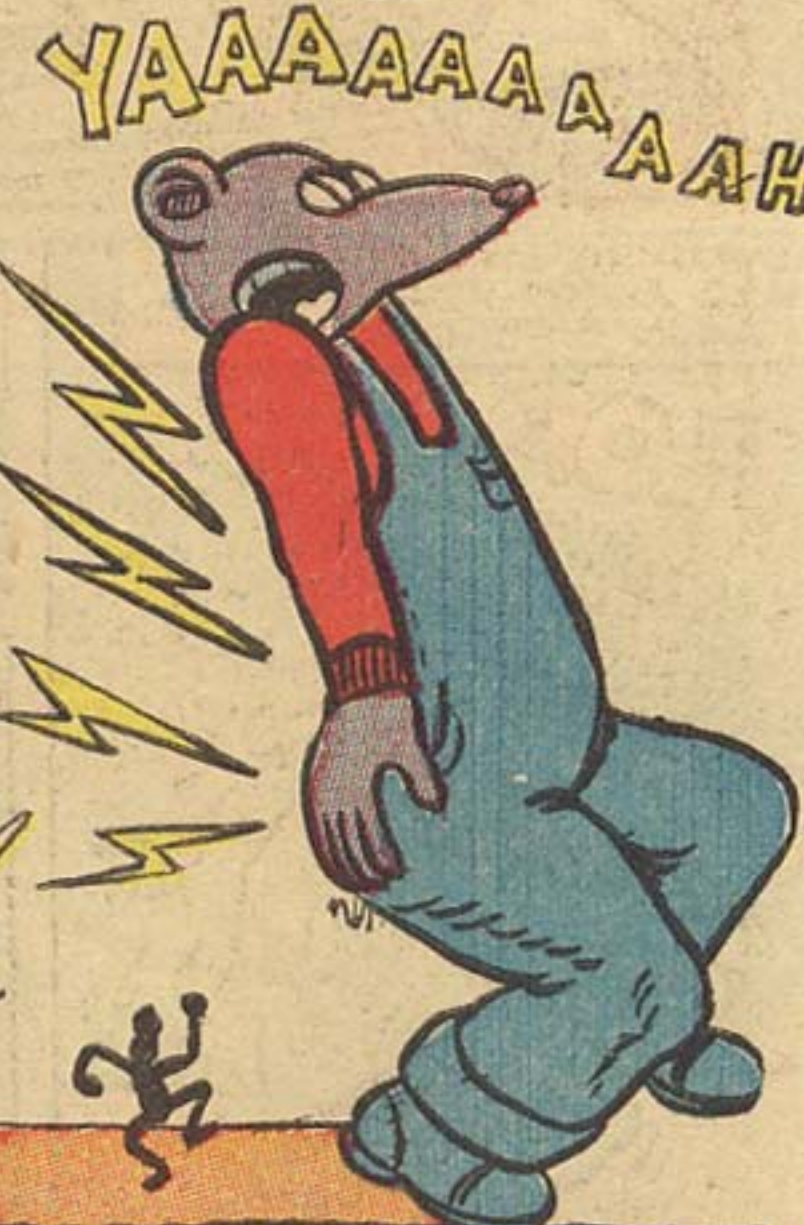
LET 'ER GO!



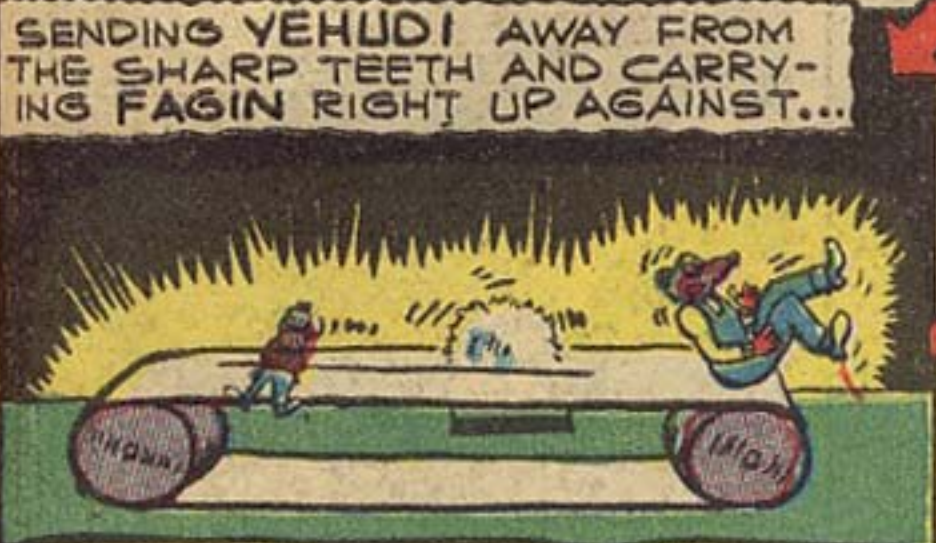
BUT THAT'S NO CONCERN OF MINE! I'LL JUST REST HERE A WHILE!



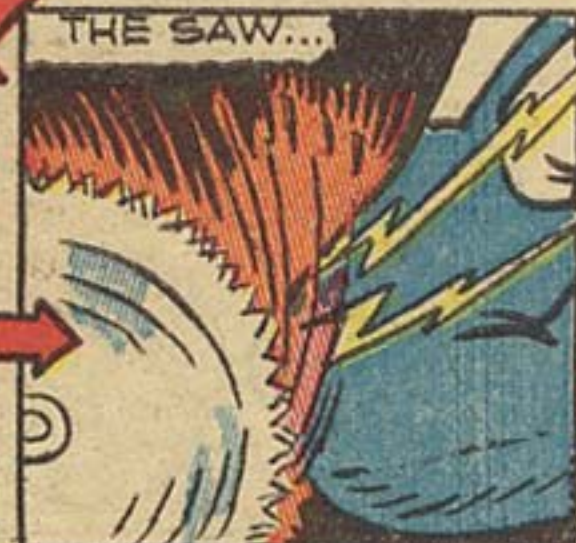
SUDDENLY, A STRANGE HAND FLICKS THE SWITCH INTO REVERSE...



YAAAAAAA AAH



SENDING YEHUDI AWAY FROM THE SHARP TEETH AND CARRYING FAGIN RIGHT UP AGAINST...

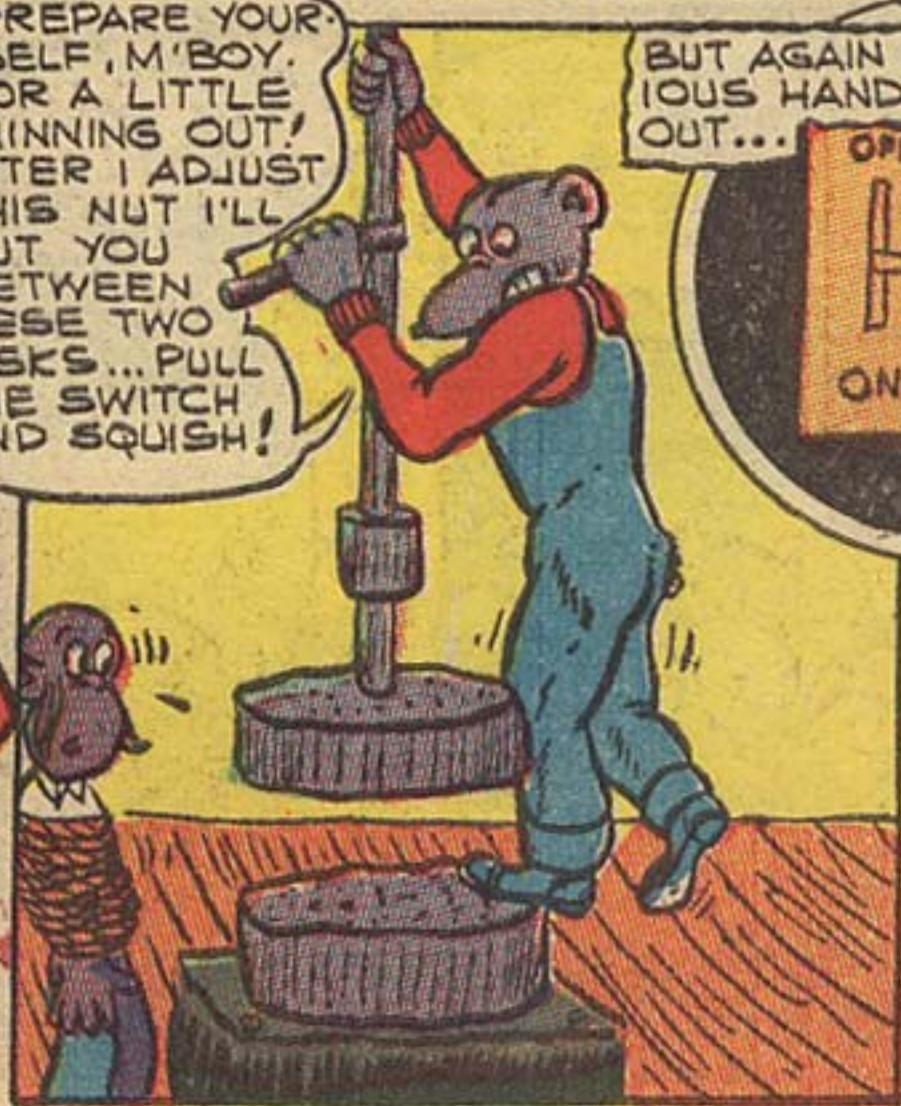


THE SAW...

LOOK...YEHUDI IS UNTIED AND RUNNING AWAY...WHAT'S HAPPENING AROUND HERE?



DARN FUNNY, THAT TRAP AND NOW THE SAW. AND...AND THE KID'S GONE! WELL—I'LL FIX THE OTHER TWO!

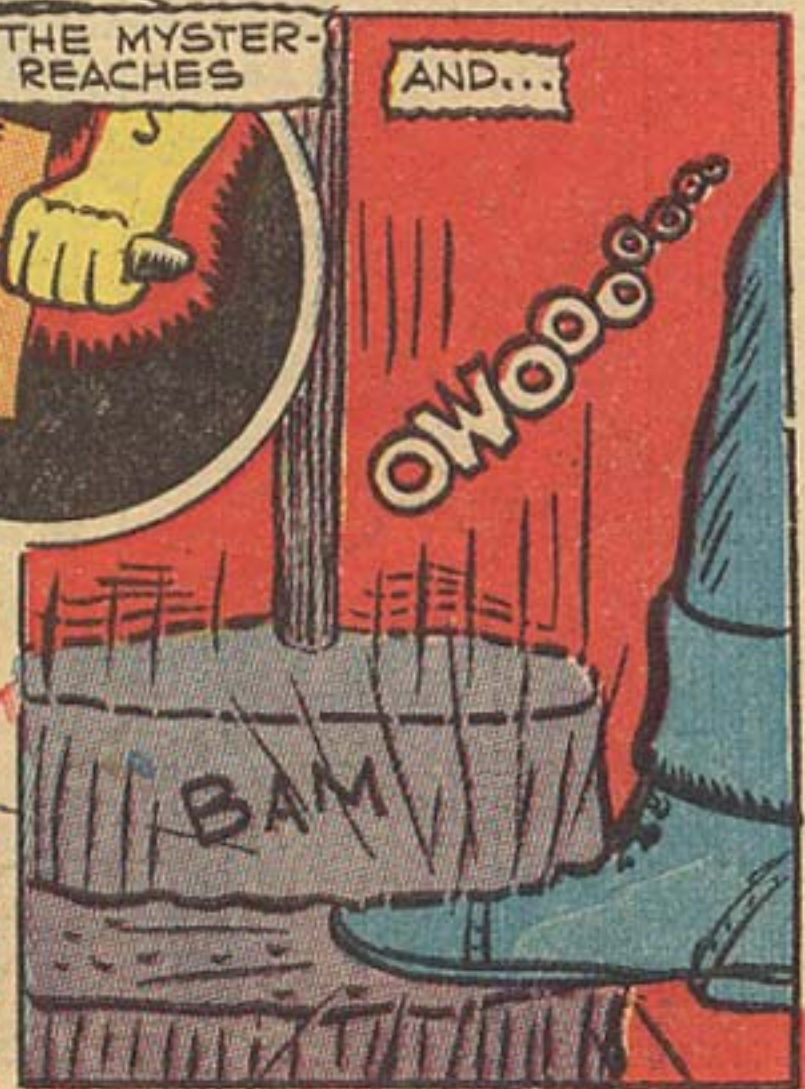


PREPARE YOURSELF, M'BOY. FOR A LITTLE THINNING OUT! AFTER I ADJUST THIS NUT I'LL PUT YOU BETWEEN THESE TWO DISKS... PULL THE SWITCH AND SQUISH!

BUT AGAIN THE MYSTERIOUS HAND REACHES OUT...



AND...



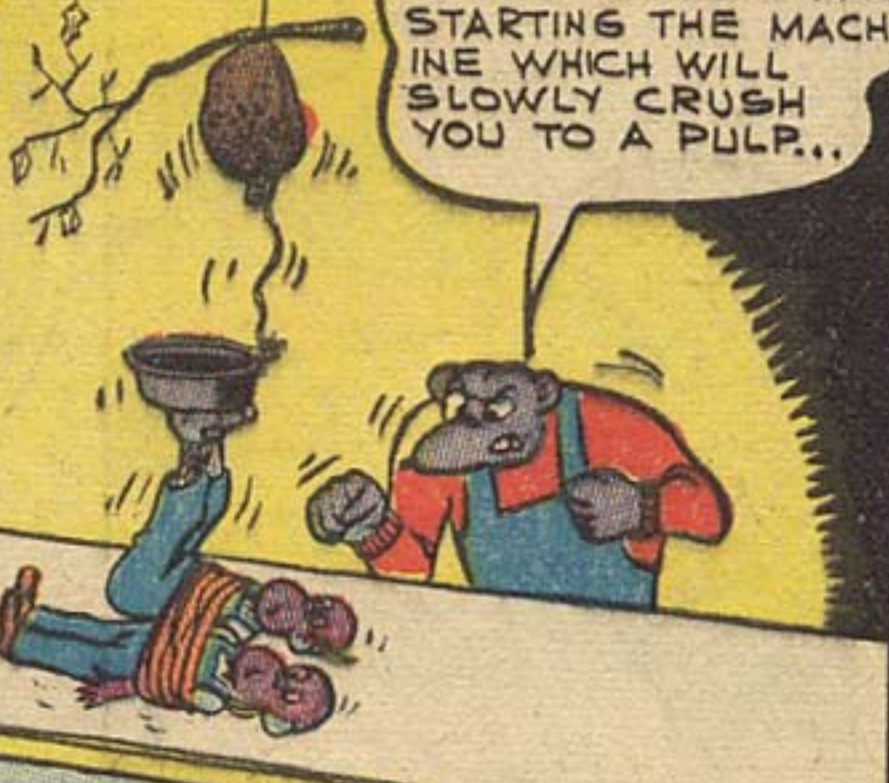
BAM

OWOOOOOO

OH, MY POOR FOOT! I'LL KILL THE GUY WHO DONE IT -- I SWEAR!



NOW FOR MY FAVORITE INVENTION! IF YOU, SMALL FRY, RELAX FOR ONE MOMENT THAT PAN OF MOLASSES WILL SPILL ON YOU, PULLING DOWN THE NEST OF ANGRY HORNETS AND STARTING THE MACHINE WHICH WILL SLOWLY CRUSH YOU TO A PULP..



BUT LOOK, A FORKED ARROW IS DRAWN BACK, RELEASED...



IT HITS THE STRING...



DUMPING THE MOLASSES AND ANGRY HORNETS ON FAGIN'S HEAD...



AND THROWING THE SWITCH IN REVERSE...



AND...



THE KIDS ARE DUMPED ON THE FLOOR...



HERE'S THE ANSWER-- STUPIDMAN!



I'VE PLEDGED MYSELF TO HELP ALL PEOPLE IN TROUBLE!..NICE GUY, AIN'T I?



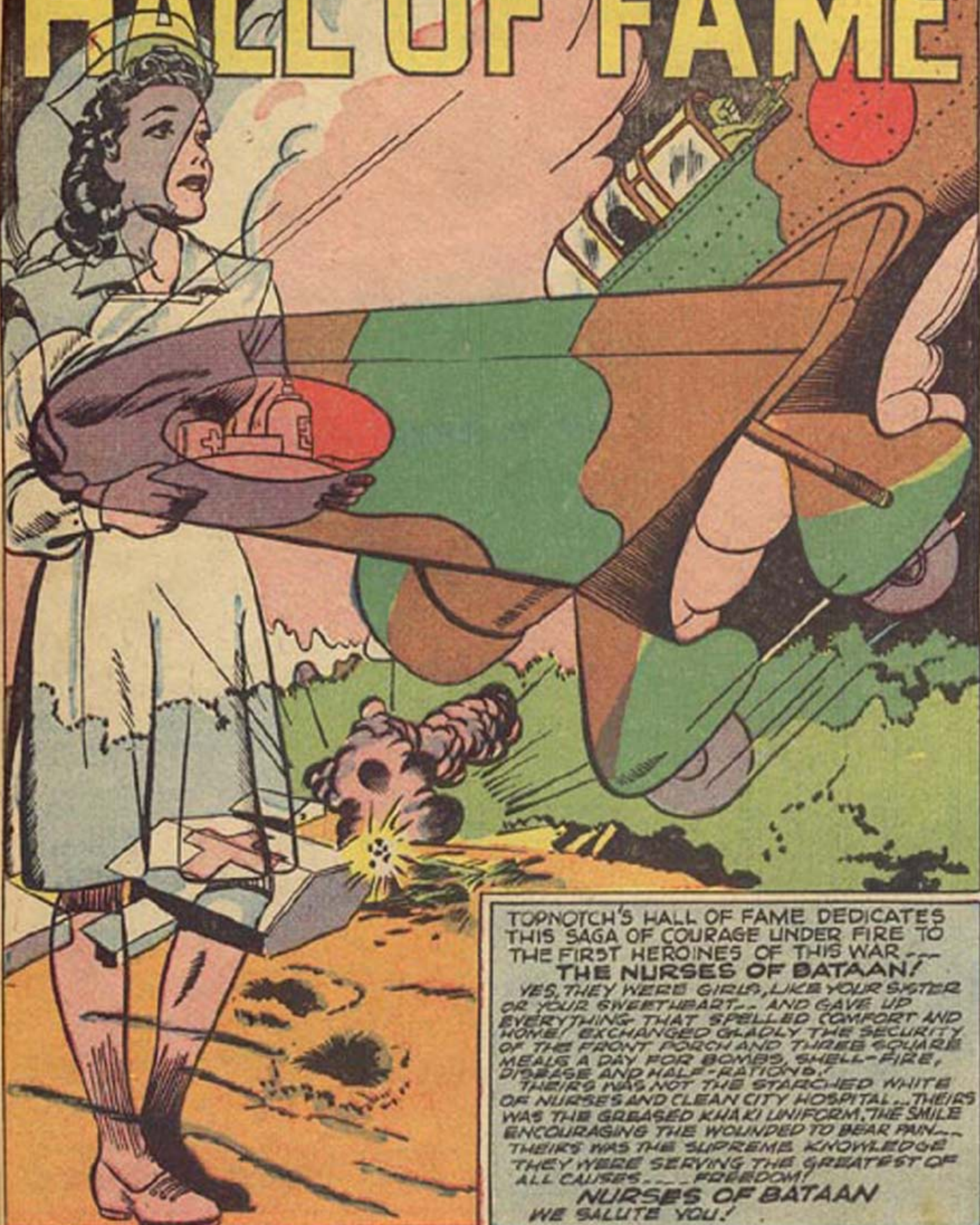
SO LONG, KIDS!.. HURRY HOME!



WILL THE 3 MONKEYTEERS SEE ANY MORE OF STUPIDMAN? THAT'S UP TO YOU, KIDS! LET US KNOW IF YOU LIKE THE GUY... WRITE TO "THE 3 MONKEYTEERS" M.L.J. MAGAZINES ... ROOM 315 ... 60 HUDSON ST... NEW YORK CITY

NOW I MUST HURRY BACK TO MY OLD JOB AT SCHULTZ'S DELICATESSEN SO NO ONE WILL KNOW MY TRUE IDENTITY!

# TOP NOTCH'S HALL OF FAME



TOPNOTCH'S HALL OF FAME DEDICATES THIS SAGA OF COURAGE UNDER FIRE TO THE FIRST HEROINES OF THIS WAR ---  
**THE NURSES OF BATAAN!**

YES, THEY WERE GIRLS, LIKE YOUR SISTER OR YOUR SWEETHEART... AND GAVE UP EVERYTHING THAT SPILLED COMFORT AND HOME! EXCHANGED GLADLY THE SECURITY OF THE FRONT PORCH AND THREE SQUARE MEALS A DAY FOR BOMBS, SHELL-FIRE, DISEASE AND HALF-RATIONS!

THEIRS WAS NOT THE STARCHED WHITE OF NURSES AND CLEAN CITY HOSPITAL... THEIRS WAS THE GREASED KHAKI UNIFORM, THE SMILE ENCOURAGING THE WOUNDED TO BEAR PAIN... THEIRS WAS THE SUPREME KNOWLEDGE THEY WERE SERVING THE GREATEST OF ALL CAUSES... --- FREEDOM!

**NURSES OF BATAAN**  
WE SALUTE YOU!

HERE IS THE EPIC OF BATAAN AS TOLD TO TOP NOTCH'S HALL OF FAME BY ONE OF THE NURSES OF BATAAN!

"WITHIN TWO WEEKS AFTER THE SIEGE OF BATAAN BEGAN, PATIENTS FLOODED OUR SMALL HOSPITAL. FROM 400 WOUNDED WEEKLY TO 1500. THEN, ON THE FOURTH OF APRIL....."

WE'RE BEING BOMBED!!

HELP US! NURSE.

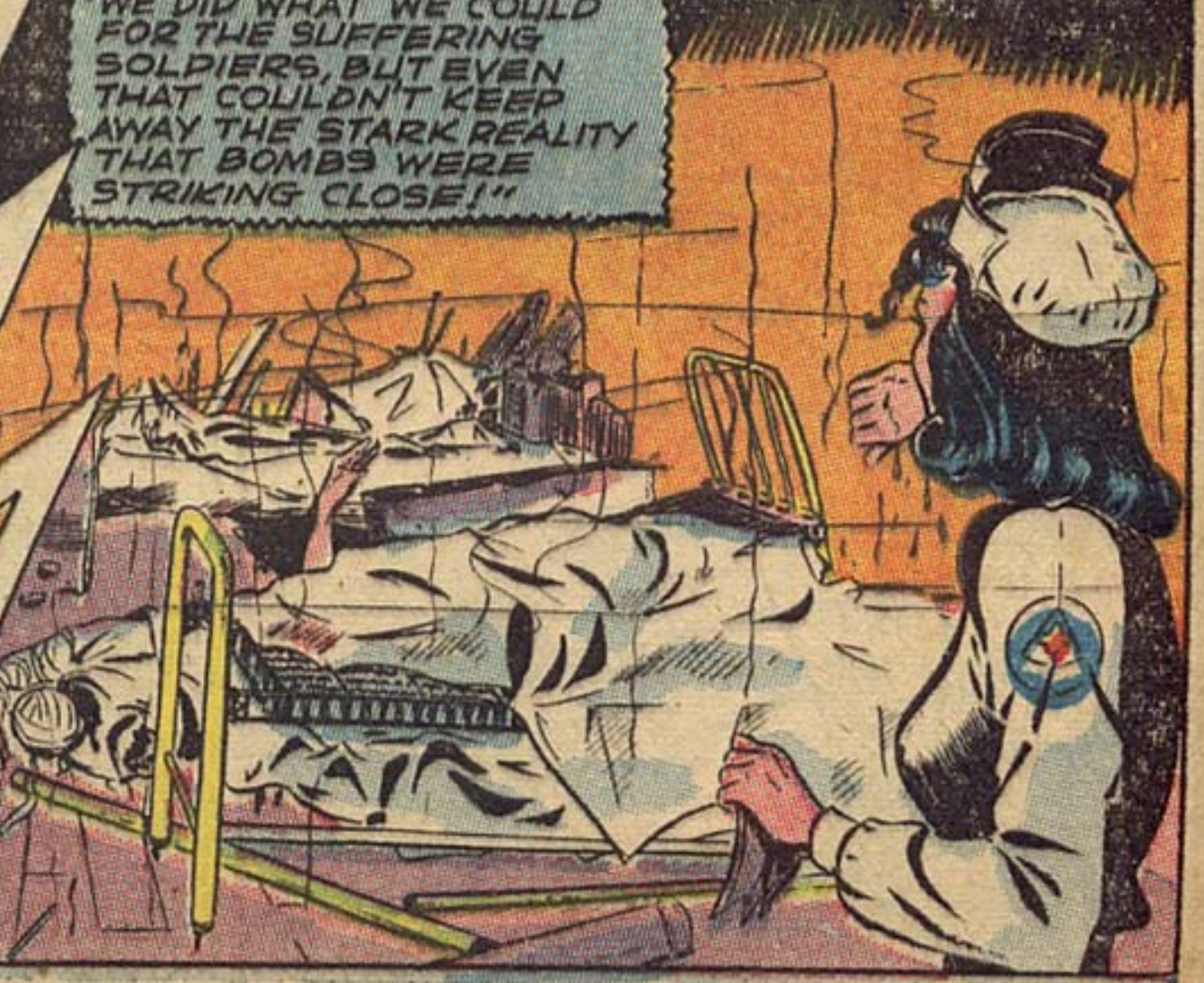
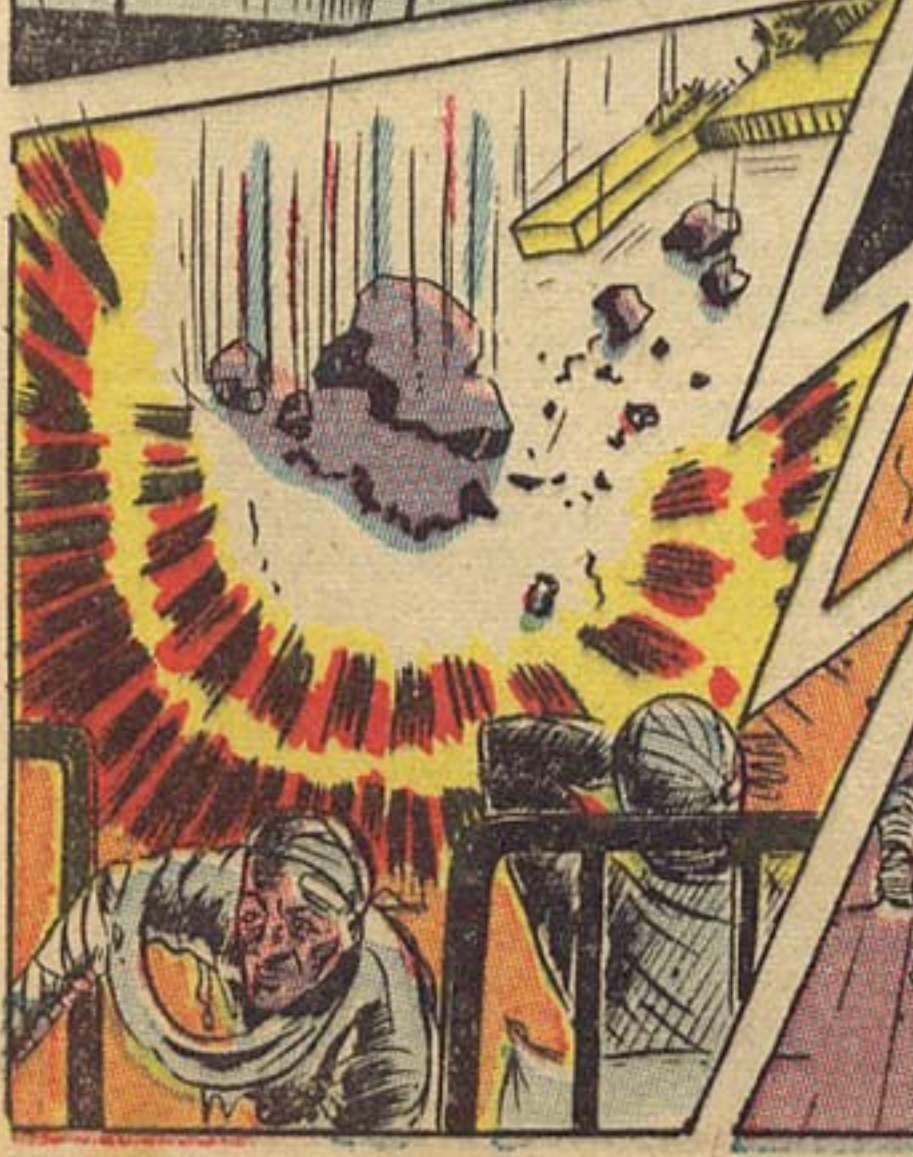
KEEP THEM NURSE!!



QUICKLY THE NURSES SPED TO THE PATIENTS SIDES, THE DISEASED, THE WOUNDED.....

AND THE SHOCKED!!

WE DID WHAT WE COULD FOR THE SUFFERING SOLDIERS, BUT EVEN THAT COULDN'T KEEP AWAY THE STARK REALITY THAT BOMBS WERE STRIKING CLOSE!!



"HOURS PASSED, AND FINALLY DARKNESS CLOSED ABOUT US. WE WERE AFRAID TO LIGHT LANTERNS LEST WE GUIDE THE JAP BOMBERS TO FRESH ATROCITIES!"



SILENTLY, BY THE LIGHT OF THE MOON WE BATHED WOUNDS AND COMFORTED THE CRIPPLED



"DURING THE NEXT THREE DAYS, MOST OF THE HOSPITAL WAS RE-BUILT... AND ON THE 4TH OF APRIL..."

HOSPITAL DOWN BELOW! AIM FOR RED CROSS! YOU CANNOT MISS!

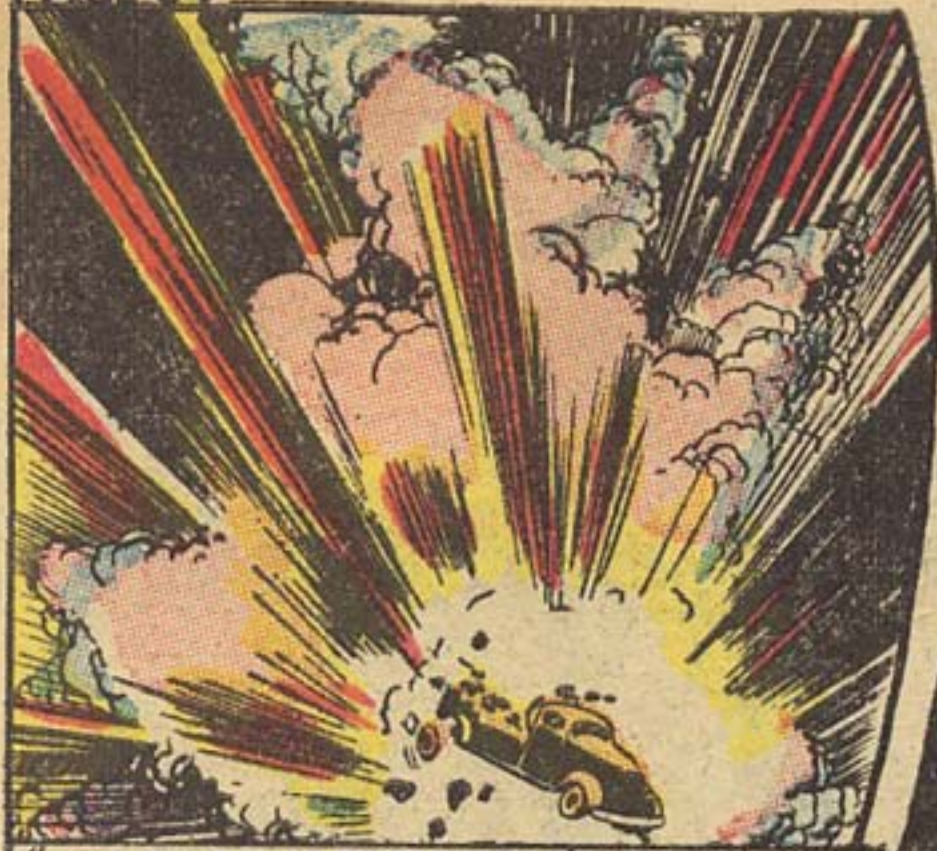


"AT THAT MOMENT AN AMMLUTION TRUCK WAS PASSING THE HOSPITAL ENTRANCE,



LOOKOUT! BOMBERS AHEAD!





"...IT GOT A DIRECT HIT! THE BOYS ON GUARD AT THE GATE WERE SMOTHERED IN THE DIRT THROWN UP BY THE EXPLOSION, AND SHELL-SHOCKED!"

"EVERYTHING WAS TERROR AND CONFUSION: BUT STILL THE DOCTORS AND NURSES WORKED ON..... AMPUTATING, OPERATING....."



EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT NOW! STAY QUIETLY IN YOUR BEDS AND WE'LL PRAY!!

"SUDDENLY OUT OF THE CHAOS SOUNDED THE QUIET CALM OF NURSE FARNSWORTH....."



OUR HEAVENLY FATHER... GRANT THAT OUR SUFFERING BE RELIEVED AND THAT OUR BRAVE FIGHTING BOYS WILL MAKE THIS WORLD THE KIND OF PLACE WORTH LIVING IN!



"AGAIN AND AGAIN THE BOMBS STRUCK, AND AS WE NURSES CLEARED THE DERBIS, NURSE FARNSWORTH PRAYED AND KEPT THE WOUNDED MIRACULOUSLY QUIET"



"HELPLESS AS WE WERE TO STRIKE BACK AT THE INSANE MONSTERS WHO KEPT UP A BARRAGE OF FIRE... WE STRUGGLED ON, SAVING THOSE WE COULD..."

I'LL GET THEM!



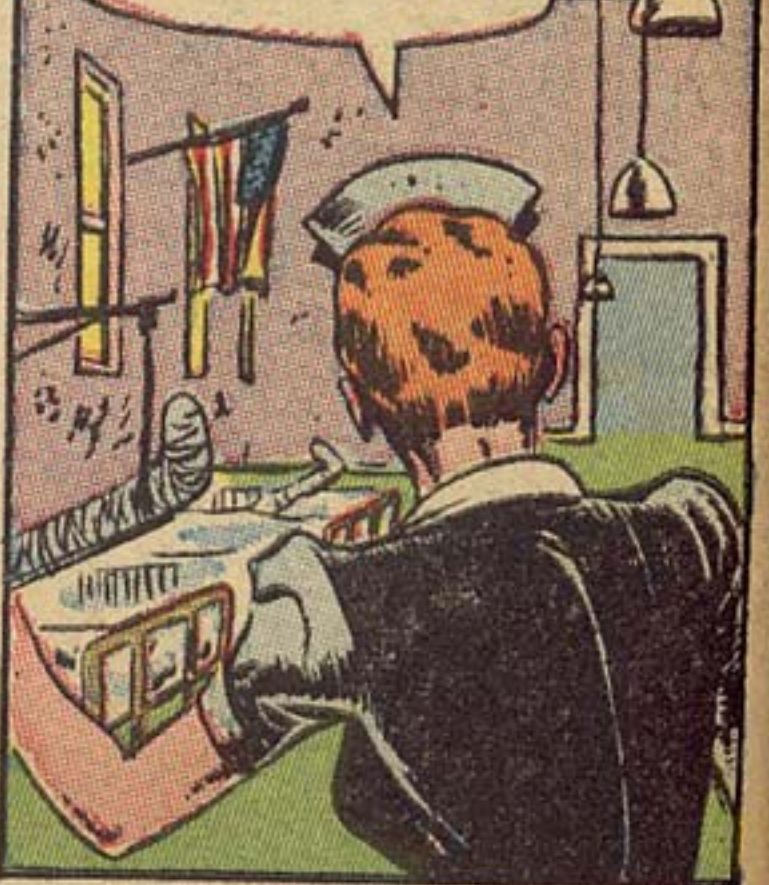
WHAT IS IT, NURSE NESBITT?

THE TRACTION PATIENTS MUST BE SAVED!



\* TRACTION PATIENTS... HAVE THEIR LEGS UP ON PULLEYS TO STRAIGHTEN FRACTURES

THERE THEY ARE! POOR THINGS, THEY'RE IMPRISONED!



"IT WOULD BE HARD TO BELIEVE OF SUCH BRAVERY... IF YOU HADN'T SEEN IT!"

THIS WILL HURT A LITTLE BIT, BUT IF I CUT YOU FREE YOU'LL BE OUT OF RANGE OF THAT FALLING SHRAPNEL!



"UNAIDED, THE NURSE PULLED AND PUSHED EIGHTY-TWO TRACTION PATIENTS UNDER THEIR BEDS..."

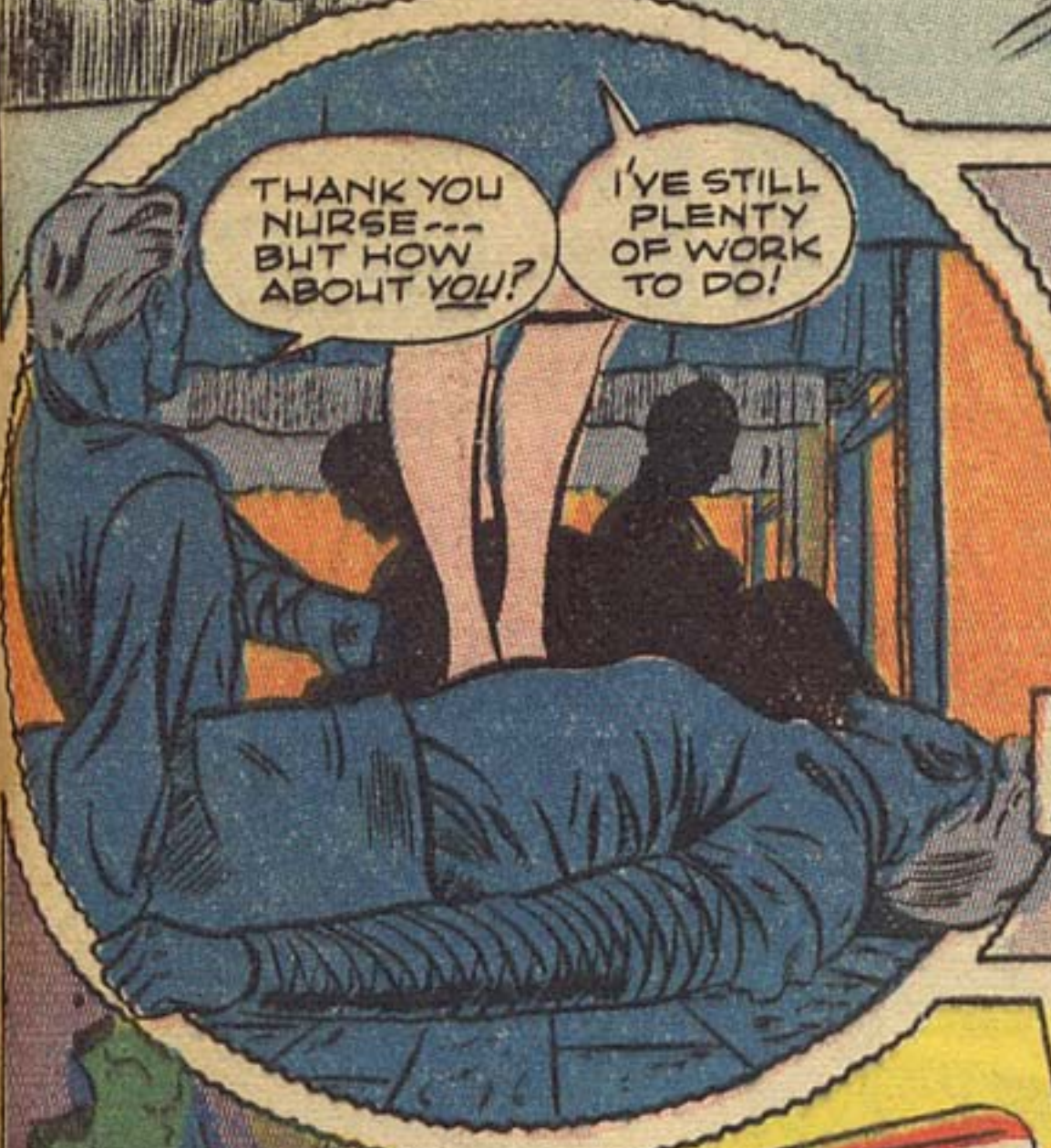
YOU'LL BE SAFER UNDER THERE!



LOOK OUT!

THANK YOU NURSE... BUT HOW ABOUT YOU?

I'VE STILL PLENTY OF WORK TO DO!



"BUT AS NURSE NESBITT WALKED AWAY..."

WHAT'S OUR NEXT MOVE, LIEUTENANT HENNESSY?

WE'RE GOING TO EVACUATE THE PATIENTS TO CORREGIDOR TOMORROW! IT'LL BE PRETTY TOUGH... BUT I THINK WE'LL MAKE IT!



"FINALLY WHEN THE BOMBING BECAME SO INTENSE THAT IT WAS SHEER SUICIDE TO REMAIN ANY LONGER ON BATAAN..."



SHE DIED... DIED BRAVELY... FALLEN IN THE COURSE OF DUTY.



"WE LEFT THE HOSPITAL AT 9 THAT NIGHT..."



"HEADED FOR THE QUAYSIDE..."



EASY NOW, EASY! WE'LL MAKE IT!

"WITH BOMBS BURSTING AROUND US, WE LOADED THE PATIENTS INTO WAITING LAUNCHES"



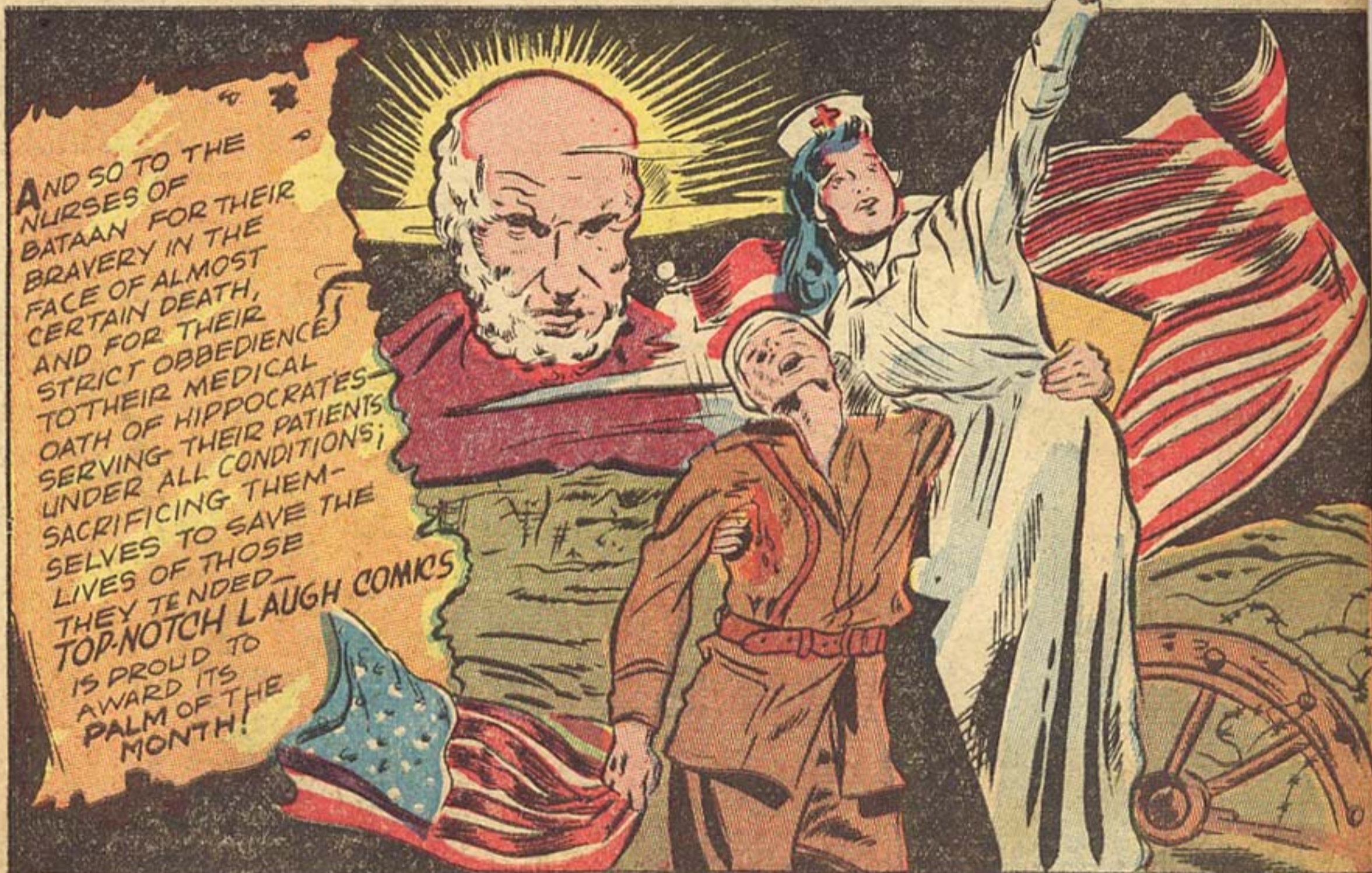
"AND WE DID MAKE IT. WE ARRIVED AT CORREGIDOR AT 3 THE NEXT MORNING..."



"AND WHEN OUR PATIENTS WERE SAFELY IN THE CORREGIDOR HOSPITAL..."



"WE RELAXED FOR THE FIRST TIME... IN A SWIM..."



AND SO TO THE NURSES OF BATAAN FOR THEIR BRAVERY IN THE FACE OF ALMOST CERTAIN DEATH, AND FOR THEIR STRICT OBEDIENCE TO THEIR MEDICAL OATH OF HIPPOCRATES SERVING THEIR PATIENTS UNDER ALL CONDITIONS; SACRIFICING THEMSELVES TO SAVE THE LIVES OF THOSE THEY TENDED—  
TOP-NOTCH LAUGH COMICS IS PROUD TO AWARD ITS PALM OF THE MONTH!

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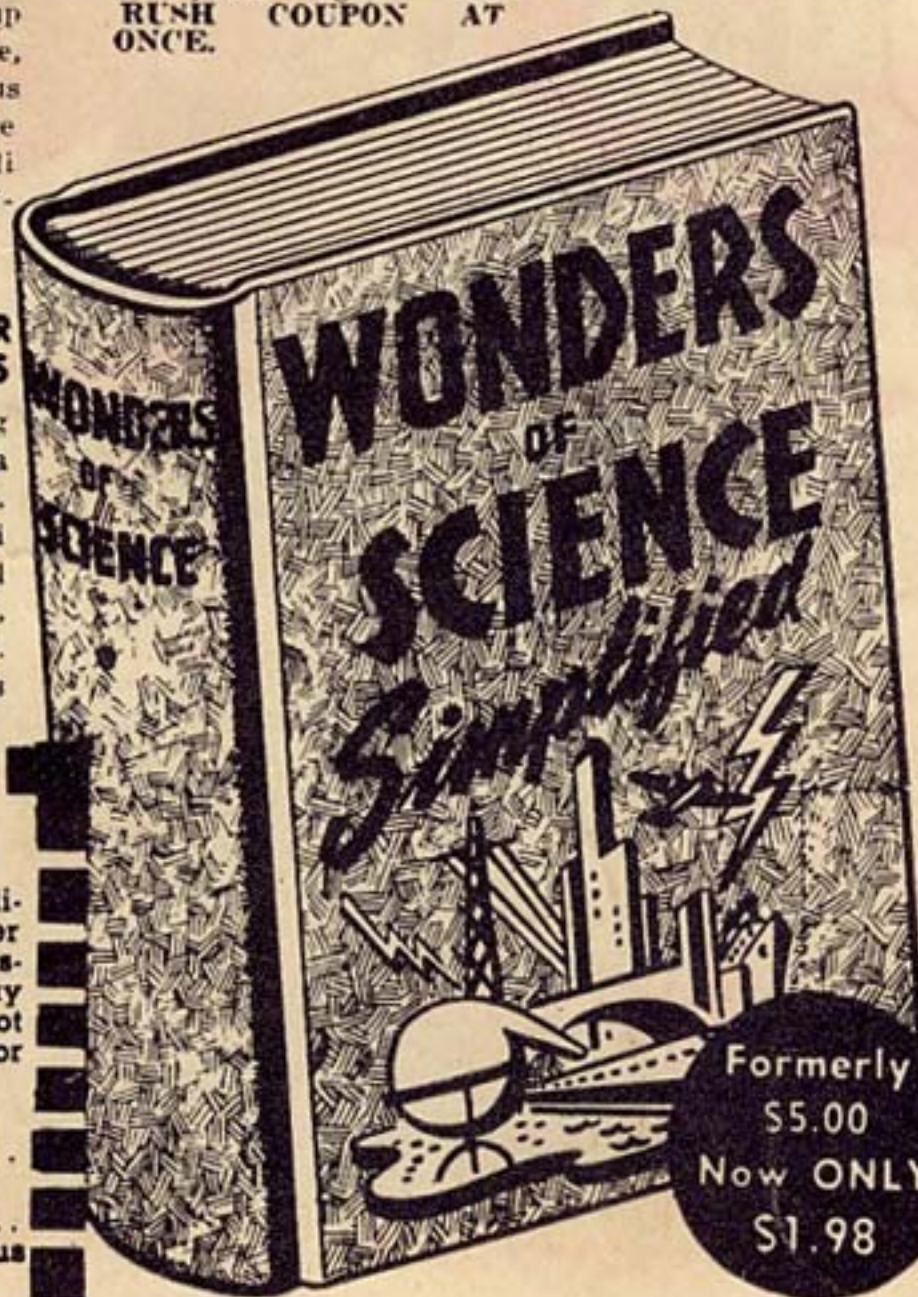
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